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HOW A-CHON-HO-AH

FOUND THE LIGHT.

BY

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AUTHOR OF "NINITO," "LIFE OF DAVID LIVINGSTONE," "CHILDREN
OF THE KALAHARI," "THE HOUSE OF GRASS," ETC., ETC.



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TO
MY LITTLE FRIEND,
EMMA METHVIN.

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HOW A-CHON-HO-AH FOUND THE LIGHT.

CHAPTER I.

AT THE AGENCY.

IT was morning on the plains—such a bright, fresh, beautiful morning! The sun shone with a pure gold radiance from a clear blue sky. The blades of grass fairly twinkled as the rays flashed across them. As far as the eye could reach on every side save one there were prairies, broad, boundless prairies stretching away into seemingly limitless space until they met and mingled with the blue of the sky.

Did the prairies go up to meet the sky, or did the sky come down to meet the prairies? That would have been a question hard to decide, if decided by the eye alone, so closely did the two color lines, green and blue, meet and mingle.

The single exception to this seemingly boundless stretch of prairie was that side on which

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the river ran. Here the view was cut off by the fringe of cotton-woods, willows, and elders growing along its banks. Over on the other side of the river there was a short stretch of low-lying swamp lands; then another expanse of prairie shut in by wooded hills.

But the sun and the sky and the prairies were not the only things that made the morning delightful. There was a grand breeze blowing—a breeze that caused the nostrils to distend and the pulses to thrill—a rich, royal breeze, such as a king might have inhaled with delight, since it was laden with the delicately pungent odor of wild sage and of all manner of sweet growing blossoms and grasses.

Here and there the prairies were dotted with clusters of white tepees, Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache. From the sail-like tips of each the blue smoke went curling away in soft rings that were soon lost in the deep blue of the sky. All around these tepees there was the stir of life. Women, men, children, ponies, and dogs were seen flitting about in every direction. In three days would occur the regular semi-monthly issue, and the Indians had come to draw their supplies.

Some of the ponies had wandered away from the tepees. Quite a number of them were now picking away with evident delight at the cool,

fresh grasses near what seemed to be a small water-hole. They were, with a few exceptions, well-kept and seemingly contented ponies. They had small muzzles, finely-pointed ears, trim bodies, though a little thick-set, and slender, shapely legs. Evidently these Indian ponies were greatly valued by their masters.

Suddenly two ponies with riders shot out from two encampments at right angles to each other, and came speeding across the plains. The ponies were small and so were the riders. At first glance you would have said they were Indian boys. They certainly rode boy fashion, and the shells and beads and fringes of their leggings and moccasins flashed brilliantly in the sun as they rode. They had short cropped hair, too, which made them look all the more like boys, while cheeks and lips and eye-brows were stained with many different colored paints. Their heads were perfectly bare, while the ends of the blankets they wore fastened over their shoulders and knotted about their waists streamed behind in the wind as they dashed along.

Apparently the two girl riders did not see each other until they were near together; then a yell-like greeting burst from the throat of each.

“Ay haitch! Ay haitch!” said one in Co-

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manche, and the other, "How! How!" in Kiowa.¹

Then they urged their ponies close together and stopped for further conversation.

One of the little girls was apparently a year or so older than the other, but she could not have been over thirteen years of age.

"Where are you going?" asked Wanda, the younger.

"To the Agency. Come go with me."

"But I have the ponies to drive back to camp."

"So have I," said A-chon-ho-ah, "when I come back from the Agency."

"I wish I *could* go," said Wanda, wistfully.

"Well, can't you?"

"Not till I go ask my father. He might give Wanda the quirt² if she goes without asking."

"Well, I'll go with you," said A-chon-ho-ah, decisively. "It's not far 'round by your camp."

Then she stopped.

"How many ponies have you here?" she asked.

Wanda began to count; but she got mixed so badly that A-chon-ho-ah said:

¹ Both these greetings mean substantially the same, "How are you?"

² A whip of horse-hair and raw hide used by the Indians for their ponies, and oftener for their wives and children.

"Nay; let me count them for you You point them out while I count."

"Paa (1), ye (2), paa-o (3), ye-ke (4), unta (5), mossa (6), pant-se (7), yet-se (8), got-se (9), gau-ke (10), *ten*," she announced in conclusion.

"Is that right?"

"Yes," said Wanda.

"Well, then," said A-chon-ho-ah, "you go that way and I go this. We get them away from the others. Then we round them up and take them back to camp as we go. Your father will be all the readier then to let you go to the Agency."

"But what will you do about *your* ponies?"

"Oh, I'll leave *them* here till I come back. That's what I was told to do."

As A-chon-ho-ah proceeded to give direction to the process known as "rounding up" the ponies, she showed in every movement how well she deserved the name.¹ Energy, agility, were displayed in every fibre of her body. Soon the ponies belonging to Wanda's camp were separated from the others, and the two girls proceeded to drive them as fast as their hobbled feet would permit. This hobbling consisted of fastening one of the front and hind legs of the pony together with a stout bit of grass rope in such a way that he could only

¹The name in Kiowa means "To go quickly."

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take very short steps. This kept him from wandering far away from the camps, and made him all the easier to drive in as his master needed him for service.

When the two girls reached the camp, they found Watch-e-ca-da, Wanda's father, ready to start on a journey. So it was a good thing they had carried the ponies up as quickly as they did, or Wanda might indeed have been made to feel his quirt. He was finally persuaded to let her go to the Agency with A-chon-ho-ah if she would return in an hour. There was work about the camps he wanted her to do after that.

Tonka, Wanda's mother, gave her a look which meant for her to linger until he was out of sight. Then she laid a shining little silver piece in her hand and told her to do what she pleased with it while she was at the Agency. With a happy heart Wanda remounted her little pony and started off with A-chon-ho-ah.

It was only about a mile to the Agency—indeed, it was quite in sight. Had the little girls been the children of some Indian fathers, cruel and indifferent, as many of them were to their little girls, they would have been made to walk. But each had her own pony and could do as she pleased with it. Though Watch-e-ca-da now and then used the quirt, as has been hinted, he was nevertheless kind in many

ways. He was a great hunter, and this was how he had gotten his name from concealing himself in the bushes. It meant "to hide out of sight."

The two little girls galloped on toward the Agency. The breeze was still blowing briskly. It tossed their hair about and the ends of their blanket sashes. They could see all over the Agency some time ere they reached it. It was only a small place, though it played such an important part in Indian affairs. Outside the agent's residence, his office, the supply depots, and about a half dozen stores, there were scarcely a dozen more houses. The latter were all occupied by white families, of whom there were only about a dozen throughout the Agency.

The Government Agency of Anadarko is situated very near the centre of the new Territory of Oklahoma, and in the extreme northeastern edge of the Comanche, Kiowa, and Apache reservation. It is right in the heart of the prairies, and away from all timber lines except those skirting the Washita river or forming scattered fringes across the Keechee hills. For some years it lay fifty miles or more from any railway station, but now an extension of the Rock Island route comes within thirty miles of it, at Chickasha.

Anadarko is one of the five Indian Agencies

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that the Government has in the Territory. It is not a military post, but a supply station. This means that it is a depot for the supplies that the Government issues twice each month to the Indians on the reservation. There are about four thousand of these Indians in all. They embrace nine distinct tribes, Comanche, Kiowa, Apache, Wichita, Towaconie, Keechee, Waco, Caddo, and Delaware. The two largest tribes are the Comanche and Kiowa. They embrace fully two-thirds the population.

Our two little girls rode on at a brisk gallop until two new buildings just to the right of the Agency seemed to attract their attention. They slackened their ponies to talk about them.

"That yonder is the missionary's house," said A-chon-ho-ah, "and the church where he preaches."

"Have you ever been in *there*?" asked Wanda, quickly, and pointing to the church as she spoke.

"Yes, twice."

"What is it like?"

"Oh, it is beautiful! There are pictures on the wall, and something in a great box that makes the sweetest music!¹ And the missionary is so kind and talks so nicely to the Indians."

¹ An organ.

"Then why do you not go often?"

"Because my father does not like for me to go. He says the white people are not our friends, even if they do smile and talk to us so sweetly. He says that the white people—not these people, but their fathers and grandfathers, I suppose—took our lands away from us and drove us further and further away, until now we have only our prairies out here. But it seems they are sorry for it. They ought to be, he says. And now they give us these supplies twice a month and the issue of clothes once a year, and send us to school too, if we want to go."

"Then, it seems to me, we ought to think better of them," said Wanda, softly.

"Yes, I think so too; but my father says not. He says this coming of the missionary is just some trick to get us over to the white people's way, though he really likes the missionary himself. So he does not like us to go to the church, though he has never said we shouldn't."

"That is just the way my father talks," said Wanda, "only *he* doesn't like the missionary, and has said right out that we shall not go to the church. It was all about a pony my father sold. It wasn't sound, and he knew it couldn't live very long, but he sold it to Dom-bi-di-e-ty anyhow. Dom-bi-di-e-ty belongs to the mis-

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sionary's church, and he complained to him about my father, and begged the missionary to see him. The missionary came, and my father didn't like that, though my mother says that he, the missionary, talked so kindly and so sweetly that he just brought the tears to her eyes. But my father only called her 'a silly squaw.'

"He *can* talk, oh, so sweetly!" continued Wanda. "He talked to me once," and now her heart beat quickly even at the remembrance. "He has such kind eyes and such gentle ways. Oh, I do wish they would let us go to the church."

"I wish so, too," said A-chon-ho-ah, with a sigh; "or, that is, *I* could go if I wished, but I do not like to vex my father."

"What does the missionary talk about when he is at the church?" asked Wanda, suddenly.

"Oh, ever so many beautiful things! He tells us about a place called heaven, and of some one who lives there who loves us very much, and who is very sorrowful when we do wrong. He has a Son, it seems, who was once sent to bring a light to those who were in darkness."

"What kind of a light was it?"

"I do not know; but it seems that it makes every one happy who finds it."

"Why! is it *still* to be found? Is the one who brought it yet on the earth?"

"No, *he* has gone back to heaven; but it is said that the light is still here on the earth."

"Oh, *how* I wish I could find it!" said Wanda, excitedly. "It must be a very beautiful light."

"That it is," said A-chon-ho-ah. "The missionary told us that it was the most beautiful light in all the world. Oh, how I'd like to find it myself!"

"Do you suppose it is even more beautiful than the great light up there?" and Wanda pointed to the sun as she spoke.

"Oh, yes; many, many times more beautiful. It just shines right through the heart, the missionary said, and makes it, oh, so glad and joyous."

The little girls had been so intent with their conversation that they had not noticed that some one was approaching them. That some one was only a few paces behind.

"Good day, my little friends!" a cheery voice said, just as another pony came up alongside theirs.

The pony's rider was a young man of twenty-seven or eight, with a sun-browned face, closely cropped black hair, and very keen blue eyes. He rode a pony of a beautiful bay color, sleek and glossy. His saddle and bridle were of Mexican workmanship and ornamented with

silver trimmings; however, not gaudily so. He wore gray trousers, a blue flannel shirt, and a broad sombrero. His coat, to match his pants, was over the pommel of the saddle. He looked a veritable plainsman, though quite a gentle, subdued one, as he wore neither spurs at his heels nor pistol or knife at his belt. His general appearance betokened Mexican blood.

“Good morning, Mr. Andres,” said both the little girls, quickly.

Andres Martinez was a great favorite on the reservation with whites and Indians alike. He was of full Mexican blood, though he was what is known as a Mexican Indian; that is, he had been captured by the Indians in childhood and reared by them. His captors were Comanches, and he had been captured during one of their raids into New Mexico. He was then only about seven years of age. When fourteen he had been traded to the Kiowas. Thus he understood both languages perfectly. He also understood his own, for when twenty years of age Andres had, through some sudden stroke of good fortune, traced out his childhood's home and his parents—or that is, his mother, for his father was dead. He remained with his mother five years; then at her death he had returned to the reservation, for he had formed many attachments there. He was no longer a slave, nor

had he been for many years. The Government had taken that matter into its hands some time ere Andres found his mother. Andres, in addition to his knowledge of many of the Indian tongues, and also of his own, was well educated, for he had spent five years at the Government schools. Thus he was a most valuable aid to the missionary as interpreter, in which capacity he was now principally serving. But, what was better still, Andres had become a Christian. Thus heart, as well as lips, spoke to the people when he was interpreting.

"And where are my little friends going?" he asked again, cheerily.

"We are going to the Agency, Mr. Andres," said A-chon-ho-ah.

"To buy all there is in the stores?" asked he, gaily.

"Oh, Mr. Andres! with *this*?" and Wanda showed him the little silver piece glittering in her hand.

"And is that all the capital my little friend has?"

"Yes, Mr. Andres, every bit."

"Well, here is another to keep it company," and he took a gleaming silver piece, twice the size of the other, from a little netted purse he carried at his belt, and dropped it into her palm beside the other. "There! that doesn't look

near so lonesome. Mind, now, that you buy all the candy that I know you love so well. There are sticks this long," measuring with his arms, "at Mr. Fred's."

"No, no, Mr. Andres," said A-chon-ho-ah, as she saw him about to drop a piece into her hand also, "I have here just as much as I can spend. Besides the money for her beads, my mother gave me two pieces all for myself."

"Why, what a rich little maid! Well, I'll save this for one not anything like so rich. There are many out here."

He said this with a sigh, while a sad look came for a moment into his clear blue eyes.

"Yes, there are," said A-chon-ho-ah, quickly. "Sometimes I get so sorry for them. They haven't any kind mother like I have. She makes the most beautiful bead moccasins for the ladies at the Agency and their friends in the States. They pay her well for it, and she is always giving me a part of what she earns because I help her all I can. My father, too, gives me money."

"My mother, too, is kind," said Wanda. "She gave me this little piece, and every now and then she gives me little bits as she can spare them. But my father does not like her to spend money foolishly. Once in a while, however, when he is in a very good humor,

and has traded well, he gives me a piece himself."

"You two little girls are very fortunate to have parents who are so kind," said Andres. "Many of the Indian fathers and mothers are not so good to their children. Indeed, there are some who are really cruel."

"Yes, we are fortunate," said A-chon-ho-ah. "My father never has beaten me with the quirt, though he has whipped me once or twice with a small strap he has. But I do not mind that much," she said, with a smile. "He never hits very hard."

"My father whips me with the quirt now and then," acknowledged Wanda, lowering her eyes; "but it is always when he is very angry, and I can see when he is through that he is sorry he has hit so hard. But he does not whip me anything like some of the fathers in the camp do," she concluded. "Oh, they are often *so* cruel. One little girl was beaten to death not long ago, or, that is, she died very soon after."

"Sad, very sad!" said Andres. "And do they whip the boys, too, of your camp, Wanda?"

"No, Mr. Andres, they do not, or if they do now and then, it is only a little make-believe whipping. It is only the women and girls who are really beaten. The fathers are proud of the

boys, and don't ever like to do anything that will cut them in spirit."

"So it is at my camp," said A-chon-ho-ah.

"Thus it is ever with an unenlightened race," said Andres more to himself than to his hearers.

"The women and girls receive the brutal treatment. The men and boys lord it over all things. Oh, for the spirit of Jesus Christ to touch and awaken these savage hearts!"

They were now very near to the Agency. Andres turned his pony's head toward the left. But ere leaving them he seemed to take a sudden thought.

"Have either of you little girls ever been to the church at the Agency?" he stopped his pony to ask them, gazing at them intently.

"Yes, Mr. Andres, I have," said A-chon-ho-ah, quickly.

"And have you not?" he asked, still gazing earnestly, this time direct at Wanda.

"No, Mr. Andres, I have not," and her eyes dropped.

"Why not?" he asked again.

"Because my father will not let me. He does not like the missionary."

"Oh, yes, I remember now! It was all about Dom-bi-di-e-ty and the pony?"

"Yes, Mr. Andres."

"Well, your father ought not to dislike the

missionary about that. He did it all for your father's good. Could not your father see it thus?"

"No, Mr. Andres, though my mother begged him to do it. She said that she could see that the missionary meant it all kindly."

"That he did!" exclaimed Andres, warmly. "He has the truest, kindest heart that ever beat. Oh, if all these Indians could see what a friend he means to be to them! I am thankful that many do."

"And does *your* father dislike the missionary, too?" he asked of A-chon-ho-ah.

"No, Mr. Andres; but he doesn't want me to go to the church."

"Why not?"

"He says the white people are not really friends to the Indians, though they pretend so. He thinks the coming of the missionary is some trick to win the Indians over to the white people. Then they'll do with them as they please."

"Oh, how mistaken they are! It *is* to win them over, but all for their own good. What different people they'd be if only they'd listen to the missionary! Cannot your father see how Un-ka-ma, and To-hau-sin, and Go-komb, and all the other Christian Indians are changed, changed greatly for the better?"

"My mother tries to make him see it, Mr.

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Andres, but he will not. He says it is all a trick, and that Un-ka-ma and To-hau-sin, and Go-komb, and all the rest, will wake up after a while to see just how far they are within the clutches of the white people. It is so sad to hear him talk this way. I do wish he could see it in a different light," and A-chon-ho-ah sighed.

"I wish so, too," said Andres, earnestly. "I am going to see him and talk with him, and I am going to ask the missionary to go, too."

"He has already been twice to our camp, Mr. Andres," said A-chon-ho-ah, "and it was too bad that both times my father was away."

"Yes, it *was* too bad! But he will come again."

"Do you really think so, Mr. Andres?"

"Yes; and I not only think so, I know it."

"And will he come to our camp, too, Mr. Andres?" asked Wanda, wistfully.

"Yes, my child; he will come there, too, and I will come with him."

"Oh, I am so glad!" and, forgetting the silver pieces in her palm, she clapped her hands. She sprang down, recovered them, and was in the saddle again—mounting boy-fashion—ere Andres had discovered the fall of the money. "I was *so* afraid he wouldn't come," she concluded, "as my father had treated him so bad."

“ Oh, the missionary would not let that keep him back. He is too faithful a servant of the Master to let that stand in the way. He will come.

“ And now,” continued Andres, as he turned away, “ good-bye, my little friends. I do hope you can yet come to the church. I am going to do everything I can to bring it about. There is such a splendid Sunday-school, too, in the afternoon; just the very thing for you. Oh, you *shall* come to that. I have quite set my heart on it,” and he rode away after having given each a look from his clear blue eyes that just warmed their hearts through and through.

This conversation between Andres and the two little Indian girls was carried on partly in Comanche and partly in Kiowa, changing as he talked first to one and then to the other. But he need not have done this, as constant association with each other had brought the two girls to know both languages. He was delighted with the readiness of their replies and the intelligence they displayed. They were naturally bright, quick little girls; but this was not all, each had been several terms to the Government schools. They had to do this, or their respective fathers could not have drawn their share of the beef issued each month. Thus did the Government seek to care for the chil-

dren in the face of the parents' indifference. It was a good law, and worked well in many respects. The only drawback was that the Government did not mingle Christianity with instruction.

Having been to the Government school, the little girls spoke English very creditably, though sometimes the words were quite broken. However, as I want to make this book clear to you, I will write down what they said, not exactly as they said it, but as they would have said it had they known English better.

CHAPTER II.

"DAU-KA-YE."

THE two little girls rode on slowly toward the Agency.

There was quite a crowd collected around the store before which they alighted. It was the principal store of the place, and there was nearly always a crowd about it, especially at this hour of the morning.

A-chon-ho-ah noticed among the others the tall form of Lone Wolf, the Kiowa chief. He had just returned from Washington, where he had been on some business connected with the tribe, and was now relating the experiences of his journey to a group of very attentive listeners. Lone Wolf was not really the Kiowa chief. He was only acting as such. The real chief was Tsait-tim-gear (Stumbling Bear); but he was too old to discharge the duties of his office, so Lone Wolf had been appointed to do that. But the Kiowas looked upon Stumbling Bear as really their chief, and he was greatly loved and venerated. Lone Wolf, too, was popular. This was very clearly attested by the animated faces now gathered about him.

Lone Wolf was quite tall, with striking features, clear-cut and regular. His hair was closely cropped, and his face cleanly shaven. He was dressed in full civilized costume, with the exception of a broad hat with glistening cord and tassels, and a belt at his waist, beautifully embroidered with beads and shells. He had just donned a long coat of yellow glaze—marked conspicuously with the Arm and Hammer Brand Soda—which Mr. Fred had given him.

As the two little girls passed him on their way into the store, he stopped in his talk to give them a kindly nod of the head. Lone Wolf was not a stiff chief. He noticed every one, even to the women, children, and dogs—altogether an unnecessary proceeding on his part, as some of the surlier of the men hinted. It gave the women and girls stuck-up notions to be thus noticed by the chief. Of course it was all right for the dogs!

A-chon-ho-ah and Wanda made their purchases, the former of beads and shells, and both of candy, Mr. Fred generously adding a gay ribbon for the hair of each. They had just mounted their ponies, and were going away again, when a kind, cheery voice called to them, "Stop, my little friends."

Turning, they saw the missionary coming to-

wards them, leading his little son by the hand, and closely followed by his daughter.

The missionary was not a large man ; indeed, he was rather a small one. Could he and Lone Wolf have stood together, which doubtless they sometimes did, it would have been a striking contrast. But he had such a trim, fine figure, and carried himself so well, that he gave the impression of being much taller than he really was. His face was not handsome, but pleasant, with deep blue eyes that could grow soft and misty with tears or flash with feeling, and a firm yet gentle mouth. His hair and beard were of dark auburn, the latter falling almost to his breast, nearly concealing the mouth, except when he spoke.

"Whose little girls are these?" he asked in Kiowa.

"My father's name is Ton-ke-a-bau," returned A-chon-ho-ah, in very good English, "and Wanda is Watch-e-ca-da's little girl."

Somehow she felt it would please the missionary to hear her give the answer in English, and it surely did. A smile went all over his face.

"Ah, you speak English? That is good!

"And where do my little friends live?" he continued.

"We live first one place and then another," said A-chon-ho-ah.

"Yes; I might have known that," returned the missionary.

"But we stay chiefly over about the pasture lands near to Mt. Scott. Wanda's father lives there a great deal, too. Just now our camps are out yonder," pointing over the shoulder as she spoke. "We have come to draw the supplies."

"And I might have known that, too," the missionary said again, and with another smile. "Well, I want to come and see both of you little girls at the camps," he continued, "and your fathers and mothers, too. But here is some one I'd like you to know, as I may bring her with me. Emma, come here, my dear."

At her father's call Emma Melville came quickly and cheerfully forward.

She was a bright-looking girl of thirteen or thereabouts, with much of the pleasantness of features that marked her father. She was small, too, like her father, but she carried herself with a dignified, womanly air that made her appear older than she really was.

"Here are two young people I want you to know," he said, as she reached his side. "But there! I declare I have forgotten to ask your names," he said, with such a ludicrous expression that A-chon-ho-ah and Wanda were both obliged to laugh. What a jolly, good mis-

sionary he was! Somehow they felt they had known him all their lives.

They told him their names, and then he introduced Emma by saying,

"This is my daughter, Emma Melville. She will want to know more of you, I am sure. So you may expect her to come with me to the camps."

Emma reached up and cordially shook the hand of each Indian girl, and then and there made two staunch, steadfast friends, who never forgot her all their lives long.

Just as the missionary was about to say something further to them, a young man came up very hastily and addressed him. Both A-chon-ho-ah and Wanda recognized him as Psait-kop-ta, a young Kiowa, who worked for a trader, trimming beef hides. He seemed greatly excited, and there were traces upon his cheek very strongly suggestive of recent tears.

"Well, Psait-kop-ta, my friend, what has gone wrong?" asked the missionary.

"I have lost my place," returned Psait-kop-ta, with trembling voice.

"How was that, my friend?"

"They wanted me to trim the hides on Sunday. They said they could not keep up with their orders if I did not. But you had taught me it was wrong to work on the Sabbath, God's

day, so I could not. I told them so. Then they grew angry and sent me away, saying I need never come back again. Now I have lost all chance to make and save the money towards going to the school to which you wished me to go," and the young man's voice broke in something very much like a sob.

"Never mind, my friend. Trust in Jesus. There are other places besides this one. I will see what I can do. I will begin this very afternoon to make inquiries as to another. In the meantime, do all you can to help yourself, and remember what I have just said : Trust in Jesus. He is the sure balm for all our wounds, and oh, how bright he can make all the way!"

After murmuring words of thanks, the young man turned and went away, but how different was the expression of his countenance now to what it had been when he first came up to the missionary! It hardly looked like the same countenance, so much brighter and more hopeful had it become.

The conversation between the missionary and Psait-kop-ta had been carried on in Kiowa; therefore A-chon-ho-ah and Wanda understood every bit of it. But what was that in the missionary's last words that sent such a thrill to A-chon-ho-ah's heart? It was the mention of a name—the name she had heard before in the

church—the very name of him who had come to bring that light about which she and Wanda had talked, “*Dau-ka-ye!*” Yes, that was the very name! The missionary had told them that it meant the Son of God. How A-chon-ho-ah did wish the missionary would mention this wonderful name to her; would tell her all he knew of this great person, “*Dau-ka-ye,*” who had come to bring so glorious a light!

As though in answer to her wish, which, it seemed to her, must come right out of her heart through her eyes, the missionary said:

“You heard me talking to Psait-kop-ta? Well, the poor fellow is in much trouble. But he has done right, and *Dau-ka-ye* will help him, as he helps all who try to follow after him.”

A question trembled upon A-chon-ho-ah’s tongue. Could she ever get it out? After much struggle she succeeded:

“Who is this *Dau-ka-ye* of whom you speak?”

The missionary turned his blue eyes upon her. Oh, how misty they had grown even in this short space!

“*Dau-ka-ye*, child,” he said, gently, “is he whom we call Jesus. He is the Son of *Dom-man-yom-kee* (God), hence we call him *Dau-ka-ye*, which means Son of God. We call him,

too, our Saviour, because he came to save men from their sins."

"And I heard you say once, too," stammered A-chon-ho-ah, timidly, "that he had also come to bring us a light."

"That he did, child; the most glorious light that ever dawned upon earth. So you have been to the church?" he broke off, quickly.

"Yes, sir; I have been there twice."

"Then why do you not come again?"

A-chon-ho-ah dropped her eyes, and began to fumble with the mane of her pony.

"My father does not like me to go," she said, in a low voice.

"Ah, I see!" exclaimed the missionary, but aside from this made no further allusion to this matter. He knew only too well just how it was.

"And so you want to know more of this Dau-ka-ye, who came to bring the light?" he asked, tenderly.

"Oh, if you please, sir!"

A-chon-ho-ah's eyes were no longer dropped over her pony's mane. They were raised now with a light in their depths that made them glow as luminously as stars.

"You speak English," the missionary continued, "and speak it very creditably. Have you been to the Government schools?"

"Yes, sir; I have been five terms. I would

be there now, but my little sister is sick, and my mother kept me to help nurse her.”

“Then you can doubtless read in English?”

“Yes, sir; a little; but just a *little*,” she concluded, doubtfully. “I have to spell the words a good deal.”

He took a little book from his pocket and a pencil. Then he turned over the pages till he found the place for which he was looking. He made some pencil marks, placed a strip of paper between the leaves, and handed the book to A-chon-ho-ah.

“This little book,” he said, “is called a Testament—the New Testament, because there is one written before it which is known as the Old Testament. You will find in this little book all about Dau-ka-ye, or Jesus, the Son of God—he who came to bring the light. But you cannot read much at a time. I have marked a place, just a few verses, that I want you to read first. They will tell you how this Dau-ka-ye is the Light of the world, because he came to bring light to every one that sitteth in darkness. You will read there, my child, among others, this verse: ‘*In him was life; and the life was the light of men!*’ Remember that; say it over and over again till you know every word of it.”

“I will,” said A-chon-ho-ah, softly.

“And would you not like to have one of the little books, too, and learn of this Dau-ka-ye?” he asked suddenly, turning toward Wanda, and noting how wistfully her eyes were regarding him.

“Oh, I would! I would!” she cried, excitedly.

“Well, I will give you one, too; and I will mark the very same words. And you can read them together, and help each other understand them as well as you can. But it will not be long now ere I come to the camps. Then I will make it all as clear as I can.”

He was about to say good-bye to them when a terrible sight met their eyes. Emma screamed in spite of herself. Even the little Indian girls, as accustomed as they were to the barbarous scenes of the camp, gave expression each to a sharp little cry. The little boy drew nearer to his father, and clung to him tightly.

A woman was approaching them, wringing her hands and gesticulating wildly to the missionary. Her face and hands and clothing were all bloody, and as she came nearer they were shocked to see that one of her ears had recently been cut off. It was from this that the blood was flowing.

A crowd soon gathered around the woman, but she did not seem to wish to see or speak to anyone but the missionary. She called upon

him frantically, stretched her hands toward him, uttering broken sentences, intermixed with shrill, piercing cries. He stepped towards her and tried to soothe her, speaking gently to her, and at the same time seeking to wipe the blood away from her face with the handkerchief he took from his pocket. All the time he was doing this he was endeavoring to learn from her the cause of her terrible plight.

But two things kept him from gaining the information he desired: one was, the woman was terribly excited, which prevented her talking coherently, and the other, she was an Apache. The missionary knew very little Apache, though he had been for over five years on the reservation. The members of his church were principally Comanches and Kiowas, as were most of the Indians in the camps around the Agency. But there was a sign language, certain parts of which were understood by them all. The missionary was on the point of trying this when the coming of Charlie Ahatone, a tall, intelligent, fine-looking Indian, who sometimes interpreted for him at the church, put an end to this necessity. Charlie was a Kiowa, but he had been much around the Apache camps, and so understood their language very well.

The missionary had, too, by this time, wiped enough of the blood away from the face to

recognize the woman, though he did not remember her name. He had seen her two or three times at the church, and, as was always his custom, had gone up to her and spoken some kind words after the services. This was doubtless why she had sought him in her trouble.

Charlie now learned from the woman that her name was Tsai-bah-koim, that she belonged to an Apache camp about a mile away, and that her ear had been cut off by her husband while in a passion.¹

The missionary tried to calm her, and finally succeeded. Then it was pitiful to hear her beseech him to have something done to punish her brutal husband, or, at least, to help her get away from him.

Mr. Melville fully recognized the powerlessness of his position. Between these Indian husbands and their wives he dared not interfere. The United States Government has no authority whatever over the internal affairs of the Indians. Each tribe has its own peculiar laws and customs. It holds its own councils and renders its own decisions. No matter

¹ This barbarous treatment is still accorded Apache women by their brutal husbands. Women thus mutilated are no uncommon sight around the Agency. Sometimes the nose is cut off instead of the ear.

how harsh and cruel a law may be, there is no redress save through the chief. But even the chief is powerless in matters pertaining to husband and wife. The husband is left to pursue absolutely his own will with the slave-like creature he calls wife. Men can abuse their wives in any way they please; can horribly mutilate them, as this poor creature had been mutilated; yea, more than this, they can even beat them to death, and no law can touch them. It is only when the Indian violates the law with reference to the white man, his family and interests, that the Government has power to act. Then retribution comes swiftly.

All these things Mr. Melville fully realized as he stood there before the injured woman. How much would he have been willing to give then if he *could* have done something for the wretched creature! But he could only pity her, which he did with his whole great heart, and speak such words of comfort as were in his power. To his relief, he saw Tsait-hu-chel, the chief of the Apaches, ride up on his pony at this moment. He was in full Indian costume, and his face was brilliantly painted. It gave him a much fiercer look than he would doubtless have had otherwise. The beads on his leggings and buckskin jacket were fairly dazzling as the sunlight flashed across them. A

red blanket fell from his shoulders and almost swept the ground. His hair was carefully plaited, with the tails of otters beginning where the hair ended. Eagle feathers, stuck near the crown of his head, completed his costume. But Tsait-hu-chel was by no means the savage Indian he looked. He had a fair education, and could talk English creditably. It was only that his old Indian ways and customs had a stronger hold upon him than anything else. Tsait-hu-chel was evidently attracted by the crowd around the woman, though he could not see the woman herself. Curiosity, that prominent trait in the Indian's character, was undoubtedly leading him to make an investigation.

The missionary left the group and approached him.

"A woman has been abused by her husband," Mr. Melville said to him as soon as he came within speaking distance.

"Well, that nothing!" said the chief, lightly. "I thought it something else," and he was evidently turning away in disgust.

"But this one has been badly abused," persisted the missionary, detaining him. "Her husband has even cut off one of her ears."

Still the chief showed no feeling whatever. Mr. Melville felt the strong temptation to give him a thorough shaking.

"They do that often," commented the chief, again. "The woman herself is, no doubt, to blame. They act mighty big sometimes. Need to be kept under!" and the chief strutted with a big air toward the store, as though with this assertion he had settled the fate of every presumptuous woman on the reservation. But the missionary was not going to let him off so easily.

"But, chief, it is one of your own women," he said, following him. "I feel sure her husband has acted brutally, and he will continue to do so, unless you give him a word or so."

The chief was evidently greatly pleased by this appeal to his authority.

"What the woman's name?" he asked.

"Tsai-bah-koim," returned the missionary.

"Oh, she very good woman!" declared the chief. "She ought not to have her ear cut off. I speak to Tsomp-pa, her husband, 'bout it."

"Do so, chief," entreated Mr. Melville. "I know you cannot have him arrested, or anything like that; but some words from you will undoubtedly do him good. I have been told that you have great influence with your people," concluded Mr. Melville, "and that they will generally do what you say."

The chief's eyes lighted with pleasure.

"I think I have," he said, complacently. "Anyhow, I speak to Tsomp-pa. I'll speak to

him right away, as I go back. Don't think he'll cut off any more ears!" and the chief smiled assuredly.

"Thank you, chief," and Mr. Melville grasped his hand, shaking it cordially. He then returned to the woman. Motioning to Charlie Ahatone to interpret again for him, he took her hand for a moment and said, kindly:

"Tsai-bah-koim, I have just seen the chief. He has promised me that he will talk to Tsomp-pa. I feel sure he will do as he says. Wait until he has had time to speak to your husband. Then you can return home. Is there not some tepee near by where you can stay in the meantime?"

"I will go to the tepee of Un-ka-ma," said the woman, quickly.

"The very place!" exclaimed the missionary. "Un-ka-ma will make you welcome, I know. She is so good. You can go home by morning, at the outside—even this evening, if you desire. The chief will speak to Tsomp-pa right away; as he goes back. He told me he would.

"And now, Tsai-bah-koim," the missionary continued, earnestly, "be of good cheer. This will not happen again, I feel sure; so try to bear this trouble as bravely as you can. I will send Dr. Holly to Un-ka-ma's tepee to dress your wound. And when you can, Tsai-bah-

koim, come again to the church," he added, as she was turning away. "Come, and let me tell you again of Jesus, the Son of God, and how he helps us to bear all our troubles."

"Oh, I will! I will!" cried the woman, earnestly, and she went away with a happy light upon her face, despite the pain of body and of heart.

During all this scene Wanda and A-chon-ho-ah had lingered. They were anxious to see what the missionary would do for the woman. She seemed so sure that he could and would help her in some way. Indeed, she had come to him in preference to anyone else. How good he was, and how full of pity and sympathy! He was helpful, too, for had he not promised to get Psait-kop-ta another position? And how readily he had gone to the chief to seek aid for poor Tsai-bah-koim! A-chon-ho-ah determined that she would tell her father about that scene. He surely would not say any more that the missionary had only come to set some trap to catch the Indians.

How could anyone say that? thought A-chon-ho-ah, indignantly. Instead of setting traps for them, he seemed always thinking about things for their good. He wasn't obliged to have done what he did for either Psait-kop-ta or Tsai-bah-koim. It seemed to come right out of his heart.

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Oh, he surely *was* good, good all the way through, or he couldn't have acted this way!

A-chon-ho-ah almost cried when he was talking to the poor Apache woman. And there was the wonderful name again! He had used it when speaking to Psait-kop-ta, and he had used it again when seeking to comfort Tsai-bah-koim. Yes, it was always to comfort and to sympathize that the name was used. How much healing it seemed to bring!

"Dau-ka-ye! Dau-ka-ye!" A-chon-ho-ah kept saying over again to herself. She was saying it thus when the missionary looked at her with that beautiful smile of his and said good-bye. She wondered if he knew it; if he had any idea of the sweet music it was making in her heart.

She clasped the little book closer. She was so glad Wanda had one, too. The missionary had been so good to them, and how sweetly he had talked! Oh, she was just longing to read the words he had marked, all about this wonderful Dau-ka-ye!

There he was again, smiling at them! and the little boy, too, who, during all the scenes at the store, had kept very close to his father, was now crying good-bye to them in the gayest voice.

Oh, what kind and pleasant people they were! Surely, such as they could have no designs

against the Indians! Her father was certainly mistaken. She would tell him so as soon as she got home. And she would tell him all about this wonderful Dau-ka-ye, too!

"Oh, he is *so* good!" Wanda said, as they rode away from the Agency, and nodding towards the missionary. "How sorry I am that my father does not like him! I am so afraid he will not let him come to the camp."

"Oh, I don't think he'd be so bad as that," said A-chon-ho-ah, positively. "He'd be ashamed to. Only I don't believe he'll listen."

"Oh, that's bad enough," returned Wanda, with a sigh, "for I do so want him to hear of this Great One, Dau-ka-ye, who has done so much for us and who came to bring us so beautiful a light."

A-chon-ho-ah's heart thrilled again at the words. Always that wonderful, wonderful name!

"Dau-ka-ye! Dau-ka-ye!" she said, again and again. The very name had a sweet, comforting sound!

CHAPTER III.

THE MISSIONARY'S DAUGHTER.

AS they rode on they met crowds of the Indians coming to the Agency—men, women, and children. There were also many dogs, most of them looking fat and sleek, as though well fed. The Indian men were all mounted, and some of the women and children; but quite a number of the women were walking, and not only walking, but carrying burdens. Now and then a whole family would be met, the women and girls bowed beneath the heavy loads they carried, while close beside them the husband and father would be moving majestically along on horseback, without burden of any size upon him or his pony. It was not unusual for a man of this kind to occasionally turn and use his quirt upon the shoulders of the women and girls following him like beasts of burden.

A-chon-ho-ah and Wanda had not gone very far when a pleasant voice hailed them from behind. Turning, there was the missionary's daughter! She had gone by home, mounted the pony that stood saddled at the gate, and, as they rode slowly, had easily overtaken them.

The pony she rode was a handsome little brown fellow, sturdy and active, with small, trim ears that seemed ever on the alert, and a look in his eyes which said quite plainly that he was very well aware that he knew very much more than the average pony.

The missionary's daughter herself was a pleasing sight, for she was a good rider, and had a graceful seat in the saddle. A jaunty little cap was perched upon her wavy hair, while her dark eyes were fairly a-sparkle. She had one of her brothers with her, not the little fellow who had been with his father at the store, but one a few years older—a manly-looking little fellow of ten or eleven. He seemed to be quite delicate, and not to know how to ride very well, for his sister all the while kept her eye solicitously upon him.

"We will ride to the camps with you, if you do not care," Emma Melville said, pleasantly, as they overtook the two little Indian girls.

Care? Of course they didn't care! Indeed, they were glad to have her, and so told her quickly. Both had taken quite a liking to the missionary's daughter.

"What a beautiful pony that is you have!" she said, suddenly, to A-chon-ho-ah. "Why, he doesn't look like the ponies around here—

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I mean he is longer and slenderer. He looks more like the ponies we have in the States."

"That's just where he did come from," said A-chon-ho-ah, with a smile. "How good you guess! My father got him from Pedro. You know Pedro, the Mexican, who buys and sells ponies?"

"Oh, yes," returned Emma, nodding her head; "I know Pedro well."

"Well, when Pedro went to the States he brought the pony back, and two, three more like him. My father got this one for me. He paid a *big*, BIG price for him, but Pedro said, 'That was nothing!'"

"I reckon it wasn't anything to him," said Emma, returning the smile, "since he got the price. I know Pedro well. He's pretty shrewd on a trade. But I feel sure he has given you a first-rate pony," concluded Emma, admiring the pony again, which proceeding was greatly objected to by Brownie, her own pony, who seemed to understand fully what was going on.

"What is his name?" asked Emma, again.

"San-ka-do-ta," replied A-chon-ho-ah.

"Of course it has a meaning?"

"Yes; Downy Feather. Oh, he is so easy. He doesn't bump and jolt like the other ponies. I do wish you could ride him! Suppose you do?" she concluded, suddenly.

"Not now. It isn't just convenient, for, you see, we'd have to change saddles," and a queer little smile played around Emma's mouth as she spoke.

"Why! couldn't you ride mine?" asked A-chon-ho-ah, in surprise.

"No, hardly," returned Emma, with an expression that made even her little brother laugh. "You see, that isn't the way we are used to riding."

"I do not see how you ride as you do," said A-chon-ho-ah, suddenly; "all on one side that way! I should think you'd fall off."

"Oh, no; I manage to keep on pretty well. You see this is the way I have been accustomed to ride ever since I could sit in the saddle. There's everything in being used to anything, you know."

"Well, it seems to me," said A-chon-ho-ah, with an arch of her brows that made the paint show more brilliantly than ever, "that when a horse has two sides it is very foolish not to ride on both of them."

Emma laughed. Here, surely, was a fine specimen of Indian logic!

"So you believe in taking all you can get, do you?" she asked. "Well, that rule will work first-rate in some things, but not in all; or that is, it won't work the same way with all people,

because all don't see alike, you know. What pleases one might not please the other. Now take you and me, for instance: you want both sides of the horse, whereas I am quite content with only one. Really," she finished up with a smile, "if I had the other side I should not know what to do with it."

"I am like A-chon-ho-ah," said Wanda. "I could not ride as you do. I'd feel like I was coming off all the time."

"Oh, no; not when you got used to it. Come to the mission-house some day and we will all have a big race, and I will show you that I can keep on quite as well as any of you."

"That is good!" both little girls said in a breath.

"You, too, have a nice pony," A-chon-ho-ah suddenly remarked.

"Yes, that I have, the old darling," and with these words Miss Emma bestowed considerable attention upon the sturdy brown fellow who carried her. It was getting time, for he had gone sadly near the pouts.

"I call him Brownie," she continued, flicking some imaginary dust spots from his ears with the tips of her fingers, "not only because the name suits his brown coat, but because he is sometimes very mischievous"—here the trim little ears suddenly backed with indignation—

"and reminds me of some frolicsome sprites by that name of which I have read in a magazine I get. Now, Brownie, they are altogether delightful little people; so you needn't lay back your ears in that way, sir."

"He looks like he knows a good deal," commented A-chon-ho-ah.

Brownie raised his head suddenly to regard her. What a very fine little Indian girl she was, indeed! He almost felt like he wanted to kiss her.

"That he *does*," declared Emma, with an emphasis that fairly made Brownie snort with delight. "He used to belong to an old Indian, who abused him, poor fellow!" and neck and flank were caressed now as well as ears.

"The Indian was very often drunk. One day, while he was in this condition, he rode the pony into a gully, such as the streams, you know, sometimes leave when they dry up. It wasn't very deep, but it was deep enough to keep Brownie, laden as he was, from getting out until he came to the other end. So he trotted along the bottom of the ditch, his drunken rider urging him faster and faster. The ditch was very narrow, just room enough for horse and rider to pass along. All at once Brownie became aware that there was a little child lying asleep at the bottom of the ditch, and not many

paces away. It was quite a little thing, not more than three years old. It had wandered away from the camps into the ditch, and there fallen asleep. Brownie's master also saw the baby, but he didn't seem to care. Indeed, he urged his pony on all the more. He spurred and whipped him so that poor Brownie was nearly frantic. He didn't want to go on for fear of mashing the child, but he had to go on, for there were the cruel whip and spurs urging him all the time. The difference was, that the horse had a heart and the man had none. And the sequel was that the heart won, as it will every time when it has determination to back it. Brownie let his master urge him up to the child, and in a trot, too; but he didn't go *over* it. Instead, he picked it up with his teeth by means of its clothing and bore it out of the ditch, safely depositing it on the bank."

There was a chorus of delighted exclamations at this, and the hands of two little Indian girls, instead of one, reached out to caress Brownie's shaggy coat. Of course he was lifted to the seventh heaven of delight thereby.

"And did your father buy the pony from the old Indian?" asked Wanda.

"No; Mr. Andres bought him. He saw the old Indian abusing him, and he just couldn't stand it, for Mr. Andres has a very tender heart.

He bought him and kept him a year, to make sure the ugly treatment hadn't spoiled his temper. But it hadn't. He was naturally such a sweet, gentle little fellow that it had done him no real harm. After trying him a year, Mr. Andres gave him to me."

"Oh, we know Mr. Andres!" said Wanda, quickly. "He sometimes comes to our camps, and he was with us only this morning."

"Was he? When was that?"

"When we were going over to the Agency this morning. He rode a part of the way with us, and talked to us so nicely."

"He is always nice," declared Glover, Emma's little brother, emphatically.

"Yes, that he is," agreed Emma. "My brother John says he's as good as another boy. I don't know how that is, but I do know that everybody likes him, myself among the number. My father just couldn't get along at the church without him."

"He asked us to come to the church," said A-chon-ho-ah, softly.

"Who, my father?"

"No; though *he* did, too. But I meant Mr. Andres."

"Oh, that is just like him. He is always so anxious for the women and children to come. You ought to see him some Sundays devising

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ways to keep the babies quiet while their mothers are listening. Sometimes he will go up and down the aisles, smiling at them in their broad cradles as they are leaning against the outside of the benches. All the time he is doing this he is talking to their mothers and telling them what my father has just said. But the babies are so now that he doesn't have to do this very often. They just lie there and blink at him from the cradles while he is interpreting."

"Yes, your father asked us to come to the church, as well as Mr. Andres," said A-chon-ho-ah, again. "And he gave us each a nice little book," she concluded, her eyes sparkling.

"Oh, yes, he did," said Emma. "You remember I was there? Though I was not looking at the time, yet I heard what he said. It was a Testament he gave you—a copy of the New Testament. He marked a place for you. It was a part of the first chapter of John. If you will give me the book I will read it to you as we go along."

"Oh, *will* you?" cried A-chon-ho-ah, her eyes fairly glowing, while Wanda, too, showed her delight.

A-chon-ho-ah took the book from a little embroidered bag that hung at her waist, and handed it to Emma.

And there, on that broad prairie, with the savage sights and sounds all around them, the clear, earnest voice of the missionary's daughter was heard reading the words of eternal life to her two little Indian friends.

"I know most of that chapter by heart," said Glover, when his sister had finished reading.

"Do you?" said A-chon-ho-ah, wistfully. "How I wish I did!"

"Well, you can," answered Emma, encouragingly; "or at least, as much as my father has marked. I will read it to you again when we get to the camp, and show you the words in the book. You will know them better then when you see them. I will also tell you the meaning of all those you do not understand. So will I also do for you, Wanda," she added, for she suddenly became aware that the eyes of that little girl were now wistfully regarding her.

An old man at this moment interrupted them. He had been for some time intently regarding them, and making his way toward them across the plain. Now he came up close beside Emma's pony.

"Chuckaway! Chuckaway!" he said, eagerly.

Emma looked at A-chon-ho-ah, inquiringly.

"He means that he is hungry and wants something to eat," she answered.

"Well, I have nothing with me, poor man,"

said Emma, regretfully. "You see I am away out here from my home, and have brought nothing of that kind with me."

But the old man persisted.

"Chuckaway! Chuckaway!" he said again, determinately, drawing his hand across his stomach and then pointing down his throat.

"Poor Indian hongry! mighty hongry! white squaw, give food."

"Oh, dear!" said Emma, "whatever shall I do? How can I give you what I haven't? But I'll tell you what to do," she said after a moment's thought, "Go to that house over yonder, the one that runs out two ways," pointing to the parsonage as she spoke, "and that has another and a taller one by the side of it. My mother is there, and she will give you the food you need—that is, if you *really* need it," she concluded, eyeing him suspiciously.

He didn't understand all these words, but he understood enough of them to comprehend what he had been told to do. The gesture alone would have conveyed this to him without the words. It may have been that he understood, too, the sudden suspicion with reference to his honesty. But if he did, he didn't give the slightest expression of comprehension. Instead, he turned eagerly away toward the parsonage.

"That will make the fifth one that has been there to-day, and it isn't half over yet," said Glover, with a demure expression about the corner of his lips. "What *will* the little mother do? There were but two biscuits in the safe, and the flour is getting awfully low. I heard my father say that if the Mission Board didn't send his salary soon, he didn't know what we'd do."

"Yes it *is* too bad!" exclaimed Emma, regretfully. "I am *so* sorry I sent him to mother; but, then, what else was I to do? He seemed really hungry, or at least he so represented," correcting herself.

"I don't believe he was half so hungry as he made out," declared Glover. "So many of them have fooled us. But then my father says we must never turn any away, for fear of sending off one who is really hungry. He wants all to feel we are their friends. He has denied himself many times to give to them."

"That he has, bless him," exclaimed Emma, her eyes growing very soft and tender. "I wish we could all be like him. But do you think the Indian was really hungry?" turning inquiringly toward A-chon-ho-ah.

"I don't know," she answered, doubtfully. "He looks rather fat, and so, too, does the dog!"

All turned now to gaze at the Indian, who

was some paces away, and walking with alacrity in the direction of the mission-house. Sure enough he did look rather fat, while his dog fairly waddled!

"But I guess fat people can be hungry," said Emma, consolingly.

"Yes, I guess they can," commented Glover. "Mr. Snelly is always hungry, and he's fat; or, at least, he eats like it. I feel awful whenever I see him coming to dinner, for I just know I won't have much showing after he gets through."

"Mr. Snelly is only greedy," returned his sister, much amused, "and this is, doubtless, what that old Indian is, too. Indeed, I feel sure of it now. Do not all the Indians get rations?" she asked, turning again to A-chon-ho-ah.

"Oh, yes; and they get plenty, too. I have heard my father say that they get quite enough to do them from one issue-day to the other, if only they are careful. But many of them are not careful; they waste the flour and meal and beef, eating all they can one day and not looking ahead to another. They give it away, too, or feed it to the dogs—the beef, I mean. Thus it gives out before the next issue. Then I guess they are hungry."

"I have been in some tepees," said Emma, "where the dogs are allowed to go in and get all the beef they want. They just jump up on

their hind legs and pull the strips down from the pole where they have been hung to dry."

"Oh, yes; that is quite common," assented A-chon-ho-ah.

"I guess that's what makes the Indian dogs so fat," commented Glover. "Why, that old Indian's dog is a heap fatter than ours now. Our poor dog doesn't get beef more than two or three times a week, and then it is only scraps."

Both A-chon-ho-ah and Wanda looked surprised at this. Evidently, from this and some other things they had just heard, the missionary and his family did not live anything like so grandly as it was said they did. Why, *their* dogs had beef every day, and plenty of it, too!

They soon reached the camp where Wanda lived. As they did so they noticed quite a commotion. It didn't take the little Indian girls long to understand what was going on.

"It's a wedding," said Wanda, quickly. "A young man of our camp has just brought home a wife."

"But what are those people doing who seem to be stealing from the others?" asked Glover, curiously. "Why, they look as if they were going to take even the tepee, as soon as they get all the other things."

"Those are the parents of the girl the young man has brought home as his wife. They are

taking all his parents' things. They will keep on until they have taken every article on which they can lay their hands. When they have taken all the articles out of the tepee, then they will take the tepee itself."

"Why! I wonder his parents submit to it!" exclaimed Emma. "What are they about, I wonder, to see their things go off that way?"

"Oh, they can't help themselves!" returned A-chon-ho-ah. "You see, it is the custom. This is the way they do: A young man sees a girl he likes. He tells her so, or sends her word by a friend. Then they meet to have a private talk. Soon he takes her to his parents' tepee as his wife. Then her parents go to hunt her, and when they find her in his parents' tepee, then they proceed to take everything out of it, and the tepee too."¹

"But what do the poor people do that have been robbed?" asked Glover, solicitously.

"Oh, they get another tepee and things, and then the young man who has been married takes his wife, and both go to live with her parents."

"So the bride and groom really get the benefit of the stolen things in the end," said Emma, laughing. "Well, that accounts for the easy way that fellow yonder is taking it. I expected

¹ This is exactly the custom still prevalent among the wild tribes in the Territory.

to see him boil over with rage—at least when the tepee was taken down.”

“Oh, he knows he’ll live in that very tepee after a while,” returned A-chon-ho-ah.

The last they saw of the parents of the bride and their helpers, they were going away laden with tepee poles, rolls of canvas, bedding, and various other things. The bride and groom stood by the dismantled spot laughing heartily, while the parents who had been robbed slunk out of sight, unable to stand the ridicule of the boisterous crowd gathered around.

All the riders dismounted and accepted Wanda’s invitation to her parents’ tepee. It stood near the centre of the cluster, and was very tall and white and quite attractive looking. It was evidently almost new, and had been carefully made so as to shed the rain. At the top there was an opening through which the smoke was now curling. At one side there was a loose bit of canvas. This was what is known as a windward flip. It was so arranged that it could at any time, by means of cords, be pulled into the right position so as to shut the wind off and keep it from blowing the smoke back into the tepee. At the side of the tepee there was another opening. This was the entrance. It was now fastened by a cloth like a sail-cloth that fell across it.

An Indian has neither bell nor knocker upon his door; neither is there any surface of a quality calculated to produce a sound from the knocks. When you approach his door of cloth all you have to do is to lift it and enter, head first, then drawing your feet after you. Be careful, though, that you bring the feet to a sitting posture the moment you get in, for if you do not you will soon be shedding many tears over the smoke that will fill your eyes.

Our young people were soon within Watch-e-ca-da's tepee, and were being made welcome by his wife.

Emma liked Tonka at once. She was quite hospitable, and seemed intelligent, too. She knew some English, having learned it from Wanda and from the ladies at the Agency, where she sometimes worked. Thus, with Wanda's aid, she could talk to them very well. She listened intently when Emma read the verses in the little Testament, and explained them to Wanda and A-chon-ho-ah, as she had promised.

There were two other squaws in the tepee and several children, but not one of them seemed to understand a word of English.

Wanda brought her little baby brother for Emma to see. He was in his tall board cradle, with the two ends sticking out above his head

like the horns of some great animal. The buck-skin pouch in which the baby lay wrapped, covered to his chin, was beautifully embroidered with shells and beads. Many quaintly-contrived playthings were hung just where the baby could reach them. As he couldn't get his hands out to enjoy a play with the alluring little articles, it surely was most trying to him to lie there and just squint at them as he was now doing. The horns of the cradle protruding above the baby's head were grotesquely painted with all sorts of figures. Emma noticed, too, with a sad feeling at her heart, that the baby's eyes were painted above and below. Even the eyelids had been given an ornamentation in vivid green and red. She had heard her father say so many times how injurious this was. The paints were poisonous, and often the eyes of the child were ruined. So many Indian children had weak or sore eyes, and it had nearly all been brought about through the barbarous custom of painting the eyes. A few of the children had even gone blind. How Emma longed to say something to this mother about the danger of painting her child's eyes! But she felt it was not just the time. She did not know her well enough now. She would wait until they became better acquainted, which she resolved should be soon. Then she would

endeavor kindly to so present the matter to her that she must see it herself.

Emma was deeply interested in these people among whom her father had come to labor, and she had long ago resolved to help him all that she could. He very often carried her with him when he went on visits during the day to the camps. Thus her heart had been both pained and deeply stirred by what she had seen. So many of these poor creatures were perishing without the light! Emma determined to be a missionary, too, so far as it was in her power. Her great drawback, however, was in not knowing the language. This she resolved to learn; hence her great desire to visit the Indian camps all that she could, especially with some one who could help her with the language. She saw a splendid opportunity for this through A-chon-ho-ah and Wanda. Ere leaving the tepee she spent fully a half-hour in giving the two little girls sentences in English, which they would endeavor to put first into Kiowa and then into Comanche. Tonka, too, would help. Thus they had both an interesting and a merry time, for of course many mistakes were made on both sides—A-chon-ho-ah, Wanda, and Tonka in translation, and Emma in pronunciation—at which the others, looking on and listening, would laugh heartily.

CHAPTER IV.

CAMP LIFE.

AFTER remaining at Wanda's camp about an hour, Emma, Glover, and A-chon-ho-ah rode onward toward the camp of the latter. But they did not go straight there; instead, they made a detour so as to round up and carry in the ponies. They were quite gentle ponies for the most part, and being hobbled were not hard to manage. Even Glover took an active part in the rounding up.

The camp where the parents of A-chon-ho-ah had for the time taken up their abode was about two miles from the Agency. It was quite a large camp, one of the largest in sight on the plains. There were twenty or more tepees and twenty-five or thirty Indian families. A few of the tepees were new and quite attractive looking, but most of them were so old and worn and dilapidated that they seemed hardly to hold together.

In one of the larger and better tepees A-chon-ho-ah lived. Like the tepee of Wanda, it was clean and well kept. The beds were made in a circle. All the Indians slept with their feet to

the fire, which was kept burning night and day (except when the weather was very warm) in a hollow scooped in the earth right in the centre of the tepee. The beds, which consisted principally of shawls, skins, and blankets, were spread on a framework of poles bound together with withes of willow and elder, and having very much the appearance of basket-work. In one corner there were some chests and boxes. These, with the bedding and a few cooking utensils, completed the furnishing. An Indian has neither chair nor stool to offer his guest, as he keeps none for himself. The bed does twofold duty, serving as both couch and seat.

As they entered the tepee a savory odor greeted their nostrils. It evidently came from a pot suspended from a cross-piece just above the fire. Something else was cooking upon a flat rock, with a tin cover laid over it.

Atogeer, A-chon-ho-ah's mother, and several squaws were within the tepee, also quite a number of children. There were, too, as many as a half-dozen dogs, either sitting around upon their haunches or helping themselves to a pile of beef that lay in a corner. One, bolder than the rest, had even pulled a strip down from a second cross-piece some distance above where the pot was boiling. It had been placed there so as to

get the full benefit of the smoke as it went upward toward the opening in the tepee.

As soon as Atogeer knew who her visitors were she greeted them cordially. Like Tonka, she had a little knowledge of English, but, as also in the case of Tonka, she had to be helped in making herself understood. She was taller and finer looking than Tonka, and had quite an intelligent face. She was busily engaged in embroidering with beads a pair of moccasins as they entered. A young squaw was getting dinner.

Atogeer reached out her hands at once for the beads that A-chon-ho-ah carried, and a smile broke over her face as she noticed the collection.

"Why, you have a heap more than I told you to bring," she said.

"Yes, I know," returned A-chon-ho-ah; "but Mr. Fred gave them all to me for the money I carried."

"That was good," commented Atogeer, with an approving nod of the head. "Mr. Fred never cheats an Indian as some others do, but always gives them their money's worth, and sometimes more."

She placed the beads in a little pouch she held in her lap; then she arranged a place on the bed beside her for Emma and Glover.

Emma noticed a little sick child in the tepee,

and, on inquiring of A-chon-ho-ah, learned that it was her sister. The child was quite sick, and had been so for some time, though the disease was slow. Emma reached over, and, taking her hand, said a few words to her kindly, which A-chon-ho-ah interpreted as best she could. The child seemed so grateful for the attention. Her eyes fairly glowed as Emma, searching her pocket, drew out a few small pictures, which she placed in her hand.

"Sister," said Glover, after a few moments, leaning over towards her so as to speak in a low tone, "if we don't go soon we'll be here at dinner time."

"Well, what of that, my little man?" Emma asked, quizzically.

"Oh, nothing exactly, only I don't think it would be just right for us to stay."

"And why not, Glover?"

"Oh, because, because—well, because I don't believe they've got enough for all."

"Oh, don't you fear that," she returned, with a smile. "I'll venture to say they have enough, and more than enough."

"But, sister, do you reckon—do you reckon it is clean?"

She came near laughing out at this, just stopping herself in time. The look of anxious concern upon Glover's face was just too comical!

"Oh, I feel sure it is," she answered, "in here, at least. Now, I shouldn't like to try it in just any of the tepees, and don't think I would. But I'm certain it's all right here. Everything looks so. I'm confident, Glover, dear, we'll not have puppy placed before us as our father did in one of his experiences.¹ Let us stay and eat, anyhow, if they ask us, which they'll be sure to do. Father says nothing pleases the Indians more than for us to eat with them."

This conversation had been carried on in a low tone while A-chon-ho-ah was busy in another part of the tepee.

Emma was right. The moment they made a movement as though to go, they were heartily pressed to remain and partake of the meal then nearly ready. A-chon-ho-ah was loudest in her entreaties, though her mother, too, joined in them cordially.

In a half-hour or so the meal was served. It consisted of strips of beef nicely stewed, some boiled beans, dried fruit also stewed, and hoe-cake cooked on the stones. Emma and Glover had their beef in a tin plate between them. All the Indians took theirs from the pot as

¹ This had actually occurred to the missionary. Some of the Indians on the reservation still eat dog; of course, they are among the wilder tribes.

they wanted it. The bread was broken into pieces and spread out upon a bit of oil-cloth.

The dinner was really quite palatable, and both Emma and Glover enjoyed it. This seemed to please the Indians greatly, especially A-chon-ho-ah. While they were eating, an Indian came very hurriedly into the tepee, looked around, muttered a few words, and then as hastily went out again.

Emma glanced inquiringly toward A-chon-ho-ah. The Indian's conduct had been such as to quite arouse her curiosity.

"There has a little baby been born at his tepee," said A-chon-ho-ah, "and he is looking around for a name for it."

"Looking around for *a name?*" repeated Emma, in astonishment.

"Yes, that is the way it is done. The father will go all around the camps, and whatever he sees that strikes him most, he will give that name to the baby.¹

"Well, he didn't see anything in here but a lot of us eating dinner," said Emma. "He surely won't call the child 'Eating Dinner'!" and she laughed.

"But he might," ventured A-chon-ho-ah.

"Oh, that would be *too* funny!"

¹ This is true. The Indians hunt names for their babies in the manner described above.

“They are called even stranger things than that.”

So Emma was to discover. A considerable commotion just outside the camp now attracted their attention. There was a muffled, pounding noise, followed by groans and cries and shrieks. All hurried out to see what was the matter. An Indian had been thrown from his pony and his leg broken. The cries and shrieks came from the members of his family and friends; the groans from himself. The muffled sounds were caused by the beating of the medicine man upon the tom-tom. He was doing it to drive away the evil spirits that were tormenting the crippled man.

Among the crowd of Indians gathered was the father of the newly-arrived child. He seemed greatly interested, and stood for a few moments intently regarding the scene; then he hurried away. In a little while they learned that he had decided to call the child “Ama-co-pha,” which means “Broken Leg.”

A message now came to Emma. The mother, who had heard of her presence in the camp, sent to beg her to come and take the baby out into the sun.

A strong belief of the Indians is, that if one they think is good can take the baby out into the sun shortly after its birth, the sun will,

out of consideration for the good person, impart any number of good qualities to the baby.¹

This mother, it seems, had been a frequent attendant of the mission church, had seen Emma there from time to time, and was thoroughly convinced of her goodness.

At first Emma was inclined to refuse, she was so embarrassed by the request. But when it was explained to her clearly, and she caught the full significance of the compliment the mother had paid her, her heart at once prompted her to comply. There was a consideration, too, that came to her with full weight. She might in this way help her father in his work; for had not the mother's request shown great confidence in the missionary and his family? for, of course, the mother's regard for her came through her connection with the dear father, whom so many of the Indians had grown to love and trust. So she resolved to go, even though it did embarrass her.

Glover was greatly amused at what his sister had been asked to do; but she had managed to whisper to him that he must not show his amusement, as it would doubtless hurt the feelings of the Indians; so he managed to keep

¹ This is not in the least overdrawn.

his face very grave as he walked beside his sister and A-chon-ho-ah to the tepee.

The poor little baby's ears had already been pierced and tiny rings slipped into them—two rings in each ear. Soft cloth had been wound around the little one, in strips, from its head to its heels; even its arms were bound down to its sides.

The mother gave the baby to Emma wrapped in her shawl, smiling as she did so—a happy, contented smile that went straight to the young girl's heart. It showed how much she depended upon her for the good qualities that were to be imparted to her baby.

A little pang went to Emma's conscience as she took the baby. Was she not by this act sanctioning a superstitious practice? Ought she not to enlighten this mother and to tell her how foolish it all was? But, then, on the other hand, would not her feelings be dreadfully hurt? and might it not really do more harm than good? Then, too, it would take so long to explain it to her, and the probability was that she would not understand in the end. It could assuredly do no harm to take the baby out into the sun and hold it there a little while. There was really nothing wrong in the act itself; it was only that she seemed to sanction a superstitious practice. Afterwards she could explain

by degrees to the mother how she only did this to please her, and that no real good could come to the baby after all. She knew the woman came now and then to church. She would make it a point to talk to her whenever she could. Now she seemed so happy over the baby, and so delighted that it was to be taken out into the sun by the good missionary's daughter, that Emma had not the heart either to refuse or to throw cold water upon the mother's ardor. So she lifted the baby gently and carefully and bore it out of the tepee. There she kept it in the sun, either sitting down or walking about with it, for fully ten or fifteen minutes.

Glover kept close beside her, ready to laugh at any moment, yet doing his best to keep his face straight. He really admired the baby, which was a fine, bright-looking child, and even offered to take it once when his sister's arms seemed a little tired. But she thought it best not to give it to him. The mother had entrusted it to her so implicitly, and there were the other Indians looking on! A number had followed her from the tepee, while a crowd had also collected about her as she came out of doors.

When Emma took the baby back into the tepee he was straightway put into his buckskin

box cradle. This cradle was similar to the one at Wanda's tent. It was shaped just like the slipper watch-cases you have seen, only, instead of the round heel, there were the long horns sticking upward. At the toe of the slipper, or rather from the instep down to the toe, was baby's buckskin pouch. As soon as baby was placed in this pouch he was laced up, just as we lace a shoe, until only his face was to be seen. Henceforth, until able to go on his own feet, this was the way baby would be carried—in this cradle strapped to his mother's back. He would never know the luxury of being carried in her arms. How bad to be an Indian baby!

The mother smiled again, and gave emphatic expression to her thanks as Emma returned the baby. How the young girl longed to talk to her then, but A-chon-ho-ah was urging her to return to their tepee. She was so anxious to have her read in the little book to them. She wanted her mother especially to hear it, and she hoped, too, that her father would be there by this time.

When they returned to A-chon-ho-ah's tepee they found the medicine man there. He had come to see the little sick girl. Ton-ke-a-bau had doubtless sent him. He was down over the child and blowing his breath into her face. He would do this a while and then toss his hands upward as though he were tossing the

breath with them. This he did so as to entice away the bad spirit of which he declared the child was possessed.

When he had done this a number of times he leaned still further over the child, and, placing his mouth to hers, pretended to draw with all his might by means of his breath. In a few moments he triumphantly brought a piece of plaited hair to view, which he declared he had drawn from her heart.

Emma was disgusted, and outraged, too. How she longed to expose the medicine man and his shameless tricks! But she dared not say anything, at least not while he was present, for fear of a disturbance. Indeed, she well knew how jealous these medicine men were of their reputation, and how they would not brook interference even from the family of the sick person. She had heard her father say so again and again. He was always very careful himself not to get into a disturbance with them. She recognized also how deep were the shadows of darkness and superstition enveloping these people. Even should she make the attempt to make clear to them the trickery practiced by the medicine man, would they believe her? No; evidently not. Their faith in him was too great. Her best course, then, was to keep perfectly still while the medicine man was present. When he

had gone away, then she could talk to them, and, maybe, in a kind, gentle way could say something that would open their eyes, in part, at least. She also resolved that she would read the verses in the Testament which A-chon-ho-ah was entreating her to read. She would try to make as much clear to their darkened minds as it was in her power to do in the space of time at her command.

After making some horrid noises, both with his own voice and by means of some rattle-gourds he carried, the medicine man arose to go away. He was a most forbidding-looking object, enough in himself to frighten the child even without his horrible mummerly. He was entirely nude, with the exception of a waist-cloth and a blanket fastened about his neck and shoulders, which hung down his back like a mantle. His face, breast, and arms were smeared with paint in the most hideous patterns. His eyebrows were long and bristling and dyed a brilliant red, with spots of blue and yellow above them. His hair, into which otter tails had been plaited, hung far below his waist. At the top of his head was a cluster of eagle feathers. As he passed by Emma and Glover on his way out, he gave them a scowl that made poor Glover's heart almost sink out of his body, and considerably disconcerted Emma.

That was doubtless exactly what he intended to do.

"He is a horrid-looking man," Emma said to A-chon-ho-ah. "Do you think he can do your little sister any good?"

"He has not so far. It seems really that she gets worse instead of better, my poor little Narva!" and A-chon-ho-ah took the hand of her little sister in hers, stroking it tenderly.

It was very hot, and the child's face, too, was flushed with the fever.

"If you will get me some nice fresh water I will bathe her face," said Emma. "Then I think she will feel better."

It did seem to revive the child wonderfully, and Narva showed her gratitude to Emma by the expression on her face as she now and then raised her eyes to Emma's. They were very sad eyes for a child, and they pained Emma deeply.

"How old is she? and how long has she been sick?" she asked A-chon-ho-ah.

"She is eight, and she has been sick nearly three years."

"Poor little thing! Tell her how sorry I am. But I think she knows. She can see that by the way I am looking at her."

The child smiled, and, raising her hand, placed the fingers for a moment over the

gentle white ones that were stroking her forehead.

"Tell her of Dau-ka-ye," said A-chon-ho-ah, suddenly and softly.

Emma started and a thrill went to her heart. It was strange, but she was just thinking of that herself.

"I will, A-chon-ho-ah; I will tell her in the simplest words I can, and you, too, must try to make it clear."

"Dau-ka-ye, Narva," Emma continued, turning to the child and taking the little hot hand in hers, "Dau-ka-ye is some one who is very, very good, some one who loves you dearly. His home is in the sky, away up beyond the beautiful blue you see, and, oh! how lovely this home is—lovelier than anything I can describe. There not only Dau-ka-ye lives, but also Dom-man-yom-kee, his Father.

"Once, a long, long while ago, Dau-ka-ye came to this earth—came to tell the people of this home in the sky, and how they might reach it if only they would believe in him and in Dom-man-yom-kee, the Father."

"And did they believe?" asked the child, eagerly.

"A few did, but many, many did not. Instead of believing, these made fun of him; and not only that, but they treated him cruelly, very

cruelly. They spat upon him, and struck him, and pierced his head with thorns; but, most terrible of all, they even put him to death."

"Oh! how *could* they have done that?" cried Narva, her eyes swimming in tears.

"Because they were mean and cruel, and because they did not believe that he was really Dau-ka-ye, the Son of God. You see, he had even come to save them. Dom-man-yom-kee was very angry with the people then living in the world, because they had not kept his laws, nor lived as he had told them. At first he was so angry that he felt that he must put them to death. But, though he was angry, he loved them, too. He determined that he would first give them a chance—a chance to do better; so he sent his only Son to die for them. And he made it so that whosoever believed in this Son, this dear, precious Dau-ka-ye of whom I have told you, should not perish in their sins, but be taken to his home in heaven to live forever."

Emma was now conscious that she had other auditors besides A-chon-ho-ah and the sick child. Atogeer had drawn nearer, and was listening eagerly; so, also, were two of the squaws. With a fervent prayer to the dear Father in heaven for help and guidance, she went on with the story:

"Dau-ka-ye came, as I have said, and a few

received him; but many did not. He lived in the world a number of years, doing, oh! *so much* good! Then he was cruelly put to death. But he was Dau-ka-ye, the All-powerful, the Mighty, the Son of God, and so he had power even over death. When he had been in the grave three days, he burst the bonds of the grave and came forth again. Then he went up through the clouds, in the sight of many, up again to his home in heaven; and there he is now, looking down upon the earth, and seeing all that takes place here. And he is still our Saviour, ready to hear us when we call upon him, and to forgive us when we have done wrong. And, oh! how he does love for us to be good, and to try to serve him and to walk in the way he has made plain to us!"

"This is all very wonderful!"

It was Atogeer's voice that spoke, and it sent a thrill of gladness to Emma's heart to see the expression of deep interest in her eyes.

"It is wonderful, but it is true. Dau-ka-ye is the Son of God. He has been to earth, but is now in heaven. He even died, but is yet alive again, as all shall be who fully put their trust in him."

"And does he really love one so small and weak as Narva?" the child asked, hesitantly. Then her eyes fairly glowed, as she concluded:

"Oh! do you really, *really* think that Dau-ka-ye knows of Narva?"

"Yes, Narva, that I do; nay, more, I am sure of it. He loves the little ones especially. Oh! how he *does* love them! When he was here on earth he took many of them up into his arms and blessed them."

"Oh! how good that was! How Narva would like to see him!"

"Only be good, Narva, and try to live as nearly like him as you can—being pure, and gentle, and patient—and some day you *will* see him; maybe sooner than you think," she added under her breath, as she noted again how weak and thin the child really was.

"Will you not read again the verses in the little Testament?" A-chon-ho-ah now asked her. "I want *so* much to understand about the light. That puzzles me very much. How are we to get this light? Did Dau-ka-ye leave it in any place where we can go and get it?"

"Dau-ka-ye is himself the light," Emma replied. "It is from him that the light shines into our hearts. I will read you what it says."

Taking the little Testament that her father had marked, Emma read slowly and carefully from the first verse through the fourteenth, dwelling particularly upon the fourth: "*In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*"

"It all still puzzles me very much," declared A-chon-ho-ah. "If the light is in Dau-ka-ye, and Dau-ka-ye has gone back to heaven, then how are we to get the light unless we go there to get it? You say that we may have it in this world if only we will seek it. It certainly is very strange; yes, quite strange."

"No, A-chon-ho-ah, it is not strange. It is all very clear. Oh, how I wish I could make you see it! But if I cannot, my father can. Will you not come to him and let him do so? However, I will try my best to make it plain.

"You will notice in this verse that I have twice read over to you, that it says it is *the life* that is in him that is *the light of men*. It is the life in the tree, which it gets from the earth and the sun, that makes it beautiful with fruit. So we must *know* Christ and dwell in him, and draw from *him* that life which is to make our way so full of light, so sweet and bright and joyous."

But still poor A-chon-ho-ah shook her head in perplexity. Despite Emma's earnest effort, she was as much in the dark as ever. How forcefully true it was in this case, as of so many others in the time when our Saviour came and of whom it was said: "The light shineth in darkness: and the darkness comprehended it not."

“How *can* I find Dau-ka-ye and the light if he is not *here*, not in this world?” cried poor A-chon-ho-ah again, still feeling her way pathetically in the dark. “Oh, I do want to find him *so much*!”

How that cry went to Emma’s heart, stirring it to its depths. Oh, if she could but kindle even one little ray of light in this darkened, groping mind! She would make one more earnest effort, and how fervently she prayed to God to help her!

“You do not have to *see* Dau-ka-ye, A-chon-ho-ah, to receive this light from him, but only to *know* him; to *feel* in your heart that there is indeed such a one, and that he loves you and cares for you. When you can *feel* this way, that he is really your Saviour, that he came to die for you, and that he has gone to prepare a beautiful home in which you are to live with him, and that he can raise you to life again, even out of the grave, oh, how happy it will make you! It will make you so very, very happy indeed, that all the way will be bright before you, and it will seem as though a light really shone about you.”

Here Ton-ke-a-bau came in, and, after a hasty nod to the missionary’s children, said to Atogeer: “The child of your friend Nau-war-na is dying, and she wants you to come.”

Atogeer got up at once to make ready.

"Come with me," she said to A-chon-ho-ah, "and ask them to come, too," nodding toward Emma and Glover.

"Oh, I don't know whether we can or not," Emma said, when A-chon-ho-ah asked her.

"Oh, sister, yes; do let's go," entreated Glover.

"But I'm afraid it will be a dreadful sight for us," returned Emma, still hesitating. "Father says it is at such times."

"But I think he'd want us to go," persisted Glover. "You know he wants us to see all we can about the lives of the Indians."

"How far is it?" Emma turned to ask of A-chon-ho-ah.

"About a mile and a half."

"Well, I guess we can go," this to Glover; "but we must not stay very long, and we must go straight home from the camp."

"All right, sister," he returned, readily.

CHAPTER V.

CAMP LIFE.—Continued.

LONG ere they reached the camp—indeed, while they were yet fully a mile away—they could hear the howling of the squaws; so they knew that the child was dead.

Atogeer urged her pony to a faster trot, and the others followed her example. If she did not hurry, she would be unable to render her poor friend any assistance.

The howling of the squaws grew louder, and more and more dreadful, the nearer they drew to the camp. It seemed to Emma as though all the wild animals on the reservation had congregated together, and were endeavoring to make the day as hideous as possible with their voices. It was, indeed, an awful din, for, in addition to the piercing howls of the squaws, there was the beating of all manner of rudely improvised tom-toms,¹ the shrill screeching of reed whistles, and the ringing of bells; but, above all, the wild, wolfish cries of the squaws—impossible to describe, and as impossible to forget

¹ A tom-tom is an Indian drum.

when once heard—rang out with distinctness. Several times Emma felt the inclination to cover her ears with her hands, but she was afraid of hurting the feelings of Atogeer and A-chon-ho-ah. She knew it was their way, the manner of these wild Indian tribes in mourning their dead, and so she refrained.

Crowds of Indians were hastening towards the camp from every direction, attracted thither by the noise, the nature of which they fully understood. Now would be the time to show their regard for the afflicted family by raising their voices in as loud a strain of grief as possible; the louder the strain, the deeper the grief. So each crowd that arrived but added afresh to the noise.

“I think they must have a cow or two to help them,” said Glover, in an undertone, to Emma. “Why, just listen to the bellowing, sister!”

“That is from people, Glover, and not from animals. Be careful now, my little brother, not to say anything that will hurt their feelings. Remember, our father wants us to make friends with them.”

“Oh, sister, I wouldn’t do such a thing as that for a good deal!” and Glover gave her a look of mild reproach.

“Yes, I know you wouldn’t if you stopped to

think. I was only cautioning you. Sometimes you speak out impulsively, you know. I——”

Whatever else she was going to say was suddenly interrupted by a quick exclamation from Glover: “Oh! if yonder isn’t Brother Andres!”

Yes, there he was, sure enough, approaching them from the right.

“I’m so glad to see you,” said Emma, as she gave him a bright smile. “Are you going to the camp?” pointing towards it as she spoke.

“Yes; I heard of the death just a few moments ago, while at Unkama’s tepee, and I thought I would ride over. I want to be present on such occasions, if I can, so as to say something that may show one or two of the Indians, at least, how horrible these customs and practices really are.”

“Oh! I’m so glad that you are going. Now I shall not feel anything like so badly or so strangely, knowing you are near. How long since you left the mission-house?” she asked, in conclusion.

“Only about an hour or so ago. I took dinner there.”

“They were not uneasy about us, were they?”

“Yes, your mother was a little, but your father said he felt sure that you would stay in the camps until afternoon; that he had, indeed, so advised you, should any of the Indians ask

you to remain to dinner. He added that he had almost the assurance that this would be the case, as he had seen you overtake two little Indian girls with whom you had recently become acquainted, and who, he could see plainly, had taken quite a liking to you."

"That is just like father," said Emma, with a becoming little blush, "to think people are always taking a liking to me. I suppose he sees for them through his own eyes, bless his dear, precious, partial, old bones!" and here she stopped, for she hadn't another adjective in her vocabulary to express one whit more emphatically what she felt.

"No," said Andres, positively, "I feel sure he doesn't give a single look for them. They see through their own eyes, and they see quite clearly, too."

"My mother says you are quite neat at paying compliments, Brother Andres, and now I know it," and somehow as she said these words Emma blushed again.

Andres smiled and rode forward to greet Atogeer and A-chon-ho-ah. By this time they had reached the enclosure around the camp. Some men were hurrying away with a bundle in a wagon that looked like a bale of goods. Emma had an idea what it was ere Andres, who had returned to her side, gave her the

assurance. She had heard her father so often describe the Indian mode of burial—how that the body was hurried off to the grave the moment the breath had left it; how, too, it was hastily and rudely bundled in the bedding on which it had died. Emma had seen one Indian corpse carried to its burial. It was that of the sister of Stumbling Bear, the Kiowa chief, who had died about a year before. The custom was to place around the body not only the bedding on which the person had died, but also *all* the bedding of which he or she died possessed. Now, Stumbling Bear's sister had been quite a well-to-do Indian; hence, when she died and all her bed-clothing was wrapped around her, it made a bale so large that it could hardly be placed in the body of a two-horse wagon.¹ As it had been brought through the Agency, Emma had seen it. So Emma knew well enough what was in the bundle going out of the enclosure; so, also, did she know what was to be the fate of the poor, pretty little pony led behind the wagon. When the grave was reached it would be killed and its body left upon the mound. It was through doing this that it could be sent to join the child in the land to which he had gone. Thus held the Indian in his savage creed.

As long as the bundle was in sight the squaws

¹ This is real.

kept up their terrible howling; so, also, did the drum-beaters and the bell-ringers the terrible din they were making. The loudest noises came from the tepee whence the child had just been borne. Mingled with them were the mother's piercing cries and wild shrieks of grief.

Going into the tepee a sight met their eyes that was so horrible that it turned Emma sick and faint—so much so that she almost immediately withdrew, taking Glover with her.

The grandmother, mother, and sisters of the dead boy were not only screaming and shrieking at the top of their voices, but they were also cutting and slashing their faces, necks, and breasts with sharp knives which others of the squaws had prepared and handed to them. They held the knives close to the point, so as to keep them from going in too deep and severing an artery. But, despite this, they accomplished the work of slashing so effectively that the blood was streaming in torrents. As the poor mother sank down thoroughly exhausted with grief and weak from the loss of blood, one of the squaws caught her right hand, and while she held it with the forefinger extended, another one deliberately chopped it off with a small cleaver she held.¹

¹ These barbarous customs are still carried out, as fully as described, by the women of the wild tribes now on the Reservation.

Emma did not wait for Atogeer and A-chon-ho-ah. She knew they would be in the tepee quite a while, since custom demanded that they remain there until the squaws of the bereaved family, both young and old, had gone through the different forms of mourning prescribed for each. So she sent Andres in to tell them that she felt she must return home, and to say good-bye for her. He was glad to have the opportunity, as he hoped the way might be opened to speak some auspicious word.

A-chon-ho-ah came quickly from the tepee. She was so sorry Emma was going. She tried to prevail upon her to remain longer. "I'm afraid it has been quite dreadful for you," she said, with much solicitude, as she noticed Emma's pale face, and the hands that would tremble slightly in spite of her.

"It *has* been dreadful," Emma admitted, frankly, "and it is still dreadful to hear those cries and to know what is going on. My little brother is frightened, too, though he will not admit it," putting her arm around him as she spoke, and drawing him to her. "So I think it is best to go home."

A-chon-ho-ah approached her and looked at her wistfully. Then she said: "What is it that makes it so dreadful to you? Is it so unlike the way your people do?"

"Yes, A-chon-ho-ah, it is very unlike; nay, it is altogether unlike."

"Do not your people mourn for their loved ones when they die?" asked A-chon-ho-ah, suddenly.

"Yes, A-chon-ho-ah, they do; they mourn deeply and sincerely, but not in this way. They do not cut themselves, or seek to do themselves any harm. They know that this could not do the dead loved one any good."

"Oh, I should think they did not love the dead ones much if they did not do that," asserted A-chon-ho-ah.

"There you are mistaken, A-chon-ho-ah. Among our people it is often the case that the heart that feels the grief the most keenly takes it in the stillest way. Listen to those squaws now," she broke off somewhat abruptly. "Hear them howling! Why are they doing that? Some of them doubtless never saw the boy before to remember him. Why! their cries almost drown those of the mother and of the others related to him. Why do they make such a noise?"

"Oh! they do that to get the presents," said A-chon-ho-ah, quickly.

"The presents?" repeated Emma.

"Yes; there will be presents given to all those who mourn the loudest. There will be

one present better than all given to the one that holds out the longest.”¹

“Oh, then,” cried Emma, “it is all *bought* mourning! Oh, how dreadful to think of that! Now, the poor mother and the grandmother and the sisters, I know, are grieved, and their cries are genuine. But all these noisy, howling squaws! To think they are keeping up these noises because they expect to get *paid* for it! Oh, A-chon-ho-ah, how bad it all is! How much better it would be if, instead of standing out there and howling in that way without any real meaning in it, they could go into the tepee and put their arms around the poor mother and tell her how sorry they are, and beg her not to mourn any longer as she is doing, but to take to her heart the sweet hope of meeting her boy again in the land to which he has gone. And, oh, if the poor mother could have been kept from cutting herself! How dreadful it is!”

A-chon-ho-ah's lips quivered. There were some words Emma had just said that touched her very much. They were those about the squaws going into the tepee and putting their arms around the mother and telling her how sorry they were, and begging her to have the sweet hope in her heart of meeting her boy again. How beautiful it was! Oh, if they

¹ This is the actual custom.

would only do it! Was that the way the white people did? she wondered. Of course it was, or Emma would not have mentioned it. She would ask her all about it. But just as she was on the point of beginning to do so, Mr. Andres came from the tepee and spoke to Emma, telling her that he was now ready to accompany her home.

"Good-bye, A-chon-ho-ah," Emma said, warmly grasping her hand. "You must be sure to come to the mission-house; yes, and to the church, too. I want you to know my dear father and mother. You have seen my dear father, but that was only a little bit. I want you to know him better, and let him talk to you. Oh, he can make so many of the things clear that I cannot!"

"Can he tell me how to find the light that Dau-ka-ye has brought?" A-chon-ho-ah asked, softly.

"Yes, A-chon-ho-ah, that he can."

"Then A-chon-ho-ah will come. She will ask her father to let her come. She will tell him how good the missionary is, and how he wants to be a friend to all the people."

"Yes, A-chon-ho-ah, that he does; and my father *is* a friend to them," she added, warmly.

"That he is," declared Mr. Andres, who overheard the remark, "the best they've ever had

out here. I wish they could realize just what he is trying to do for them. But come to the church, my little girl, and to the house, too, and let him talk to you as only he can talk."

"I will, Mr. Andres, if I can."

"I'll certainly keep my promise about coming to the camp to see your father," Andres said, as he was turning away, "and I'll ask the missionary to go, too. But, in the meantime, you must come to the house and to the church, for he is very, very busy, and it may be many days ere he can get away to make the visit to your camp."

"I will surely come if my father will let me," was the assurance A-chon-ho-ah gave them as they walked away. Mounting their ponies, they turned them in the direction of the mission-house.

"That was a trying experience for you," Andres said to Emma, as they rode away.

"Yes, indeed, it was. I had no idea it was so dreadful, though I have heard my father tell of similar things before."

"This was one case in which the seeing was many times worse than the hearing," said Andres, again.

"That it was. I felt as though I should surely faint, and I believe I would have done so if I had not quickly gotten out of the tepee.

I felt alarmed for Glover, too. I could see he was frightened."

"I *was* frightened," admitted Glover, frankly. "Oh! the blood was horrible!"

"You know he is delicate," Emma said, in a lower tone, so that only Andres heard, "and we try to be careful with him. I am so sorry he saw that awful sight."

"You need not be uneasy. I feel sure it has had no very bad effect upon him save to frighten him a little. He seems all right now. You did the best thing to get him out of the tepee at once."

"Oh! what makes them do this awful way!" Emma could not refrain from exclaiming.

"Because they are savages, and know no better."

"We must teach them better," she said, determinedly.

"That we will. Your father is given over, heart and soul, to that determination; so am I," and his eyes shone with a radiant light. "Now we have the third worker in our missionary band."

"You have had that all along, only," she admitted, a little shame-facedly, "I have not been the zealous worker I ought to have been. I see now where I have left undone many things I might have done, and let slip many oppor-

tunities. I shall be careless of these no more. 'Instant in season and out of season'—that shall be my motto henceforth. I will come oftener to the camps."

"But that might not always be safe," he interrupted her.

"Oh, I will be prudent," she returned. "My father will see to that. Sometimes John can go with me, and sometimes Unkama, the dear, good woman we all love so much."

"And sometimes I can accompany you, if you would like me to do so."

"Oh! Brother Andres, that would be truly good of you! I should like that very much."

"Not good at all," he declared, "but simply a pleasure and a duty."

"And of course I'll go with my father whenever he'll let me," added Emma.

They were now in sight of the mission-house. As they came near to a small cluster of tepees, Andres said to Emma: "There is an old woman in here that I want to see very much. I think you would like to know her, too. She is very interesting, though so old and poor, and such a pitiful object. She is most inhumanly treated by those in the tepee with her, though they are her own flesh and blood. You have doubtless heard your father tell how cruel the Indians are to the aged, especially to the aged

squaws; and you may have seen something of it yourself."

"Yes, I have both heard my father tell of it and have seen it," answered Emma. "Now and then while riding I have come upon an old squaw, who was searching about the prairies for the offals of the cows that had been butchered. Twice I saw one eating them. Oh, it was horrible!" and she closed her eyes for a moment as though to shut out the picture.

"Yes, indeed, it must have been for you. But I have seen the sight often. Still, I have not grown used to it. Every time I see it it makes my heart sick. Again and again I have remonstrated with such of the Indians as I know, but it seems to do little, if any, good. This terrible custom of being cruel to the aged is still kept up among them. But here we are at the tepee. Will you not dismount and go in for a little while? The old woman will be so glad to see you."

The tepee presented a wretched appearance. There seemed to be an abundance of such domestic furnishing as the Indian needed inside, but everything was so filthy and ill kept. Pots, and pans, and kettles, and bedding, and dogs, and people seemed all jumbled together in one uninviting array. In a corner

lay the old woman to whom Andres had alluded. Her face was seamed and wrinkled till it scarcely looked like a face at all, but from the midst of it her round, little black eyes shone with a piercing light. She had nothing between her and the ground but a little straw and an old half-worn blanket. Another blanket almost as tattered looking covered her form. Had it been cold weather she certainly would have been suffering from it, and intensely. As it was, her poor old bones must have had a hard time so near the ground. Her eyes fairly glowed as our friends entered the tepee and she caught sight of Andres. She held out both hands to Andres, speaking forth her pleasure in shrill, almost piercing tones. Instantly one of the squaws, who was near, scowled upon her and signalled to her to be quiet. Andres sat down upon the hard pallet, and, taking one of her hands in his, began to talk to her. Oh, how sweet and gentle were his tones! thought Emma, who was listening intently, and how pleased and grateful the old woman seemed at his notice! Actually the poor creature's eyes were swimming in tears. He was saying such precious words to her. Emma could hear a sentence now and then. In these sentences were the words "Tah-ap-pa" and "Tah-ap-pa-to-na."

The woman was a Comanche, and these words in her language meant God and Son of God. In a few moments Andres beckoned to Emma. She moved nearer and bent downward close to the old woman, taking her hand and pressing it gently, while Andres told her who Emma was. Again the old woman's shrill, piercing tones rang out, and again the squaw strove to silence her, this time by flinging a bone toward her, on which there was a little raw meat. The old creature seized it quickly, and placed it ravenously between her teeth.

"Oh!" said Emma, the tears springing to her eyes, "I must come back this very evening and bring her something to eat. I will ask John to come with me."

"Do so," said Andres; "but be careful not to bring too much, as, should she over-eat, it would be dangerous. And be sure," he concluded, "that she gets it before you leave."

"That I will," declared Emma.

She now addressed herself to the old woman, and, with the help of Andres, carried on quite a conversation with her. To her surprise, she found the old woman could talk quite intelligently. Though old and feeble, her mind was still clear. She had been once or twice to the church, and she had heard the good missionary preach. One time he had talked to her direct.

The remembrance of that talk had never faded. It was as vivid now as the hour when it had occurred, though more than three years had gone by. But, alas! she could now go to the church no longer. Her legs had grown stiff, and they refused to carry her. She could only crawl now, and that for a short distance. She could not even go in search of the refuse from the butchering, that had once been a part of her living. Hence she was starving all the time.¹

When Emma heard these things her heart was torn with many emotions: sorrow, pity for the old woman, indignation for those who thus let her suffer, and keen regret that she could not daily minister to the old woman's needs. But she knew this to be impossible. There were so many cases of this kind, doubtless. Should it be known that she had taken this one in hand, the number would multiply so rapidly that she would be quite overwhelmed by them. Another drawback was the slender larder at home. So many applicants went there that what little there was to give was soon taken away. Still, she resolved to do what she could. This certainly was a touching case.

As Emma talked to the old woman, saying all the comforting things of which she could

¹ This picture is not in the least overdrawn.

think, she noticed that she had a fresh cut upon one of her arms. The wound was wide open and still bleeding. As it was more than an inch long, it was surely painful. In one pocket of the little purse she carried, Emma had a bit of sticking plaster. She thought of it now, and it suggested something she might do for the old woman. She opened her purse, took out the plaster, then a little pair of pocket scissors. Clipping off a piece a little larger than the wound, she quickly dampened it, and, picking up the old woman's arm, pressed the lips of the wound together and gently applied the plaster. The old creature's eyes glowed gratefully and she murmured her thanks, not daring to raise her voice this time for fear of the squaw who had threatened her and who had thrown the bone at her.

Some bucks¹ now came into the tepee, and as they were noisy and scowled upon the visitors, even going so far as to toss a stick or two of wood toward the old woman, Andres motioned to Emma that they would withdraw.

"I recognized two of those men," he said to Emma, as soon as they were mounted and were riding away. "Your father had quite an experience with them a month or so ago. They,

¹ The name for the Indian men.

with three others, came to him and begged him to go with them to the Agent, so as to prevail upon him to give them five or six old worn-out mules the Government had turned into the pasture lands to graze, as they were pronounced no longer fit for active service. Your father did not think to inquire of the Indians the purpose for which they desired the mules. He naturally supposed they wanted them for some light agricultural usage. The Agent was on the point of giving them the mules. He, too, was unsuspecting. But a sudden thought came to him. He would ask their purpose ere granting their request. Imagine his horror and that of your father when the Indians admitted that they wanted these old broken-down animals so as to kill them and feed the meat to the aged.”¹

“Of course, he didn’t grant the request,” said Emma, indignantly.

“That he didn’t! Instead, he gave them a piece of his mind and dismissed them without further ceremony.”

“I suppose this poor old creature we have just left was one of those to be fed with the mule meat?”

“Yes, beyond a doubt; and, judging from her appearance, I think she would have welcomed it gladly, provided that she could have

¹ This actually occurred at Anadarko.

made any headway chewing it, which is doubtful."

"Oh! the poor, miserable old creature! How I do wish I could give her all she wanted to eat every day!

"That would be a dangerous experiment, Miss Emma. She has gone so long unfed that she would not know how to control herself. One meal, such as she would doubtless eat if she had it, might kill her. So be careful how much you carry her. You had better ask your father about it."

"I will, Mr. Andres. Oh! what *does* make the Indians treat their aged people so?" she concluded, with a little sigh.

"It is a part of their savage, brutal nature to be mean to the weak and helpless, I suppose. Besides, when the squaws get too old to work, they are considered of no more good, and are heartily wished out of the way; more, are tormented until many of them are actually driven out of life."

"Oh! this is dreadful!"

"Yes, dreadful, but true, nevertheless. One of the first things your father and myself endeavor to teach the Indian children who come to the Sunday-school, as you have doubtless observed, is the full force of the fifth commandment. We try to impress upon them the

duty of being kind to their parents and grandparents. We tell them that if they are thoughtful of their aged people, then, when they, too, are old, their children will follow their example and be thoughtful of them."

CHAPTER VI.

A LITTLE RAY FROM THE LIGHT.

THE next day was Sunday. The sun came up clear and beautiful. All the prairies round were glowing with its radiance. Every blade of grass seemed to catch and reflect the sparkling light as though tipped with a diamond. The many brilliant wild flowers made patches of vivid coloring along the ground. Here and there in the hollows the grass shone with a more velvety greenness. The blue of the wild sage was not bluer than the deep blue of the sky that arched so smilingly above. The swaying syngenesia shot rays of glowing light from its golden spearlike fronds. Everywhere was brightness and color and beauty. The river, too, contributed its share of attractiveness to the picture, for where it wound there was a line of deep and vivid green, dashed here and there with threads of scarlet and gold, where the many luxuriant vines twisted themselves in picturesque shape about the trees.

All the plains, as far as the eye could reach, were dotted with clusters of white tepees, with now and then one of darker coloring. Moving

forms were seen in every direction, some on foot, others mounted upon ponies. The sunlight flashed across picturesque costumes ornamented with beads, shells, brass buttons, feathers, and stained with brilliant coatings of paint. Some of the Indians were seen taking their way toward the mission church, but only a few. The greater portion seemed bent upon other plans. A crowd of men and boys were preparing for a big game of ball; others were going to have a race. Many had congregated about the Agency. Some of these were engaged in pitching quoits. Only the women and girls seemed to find in this day nothing out of the common. They were at work as usual, bringing wood and water, hobbling the ponies that remained at the camp, tending the fires, and preparing the meals.

The bell rang early from the mission chapel. This was always the plan on Sunday, so as to give the Indians plenty of time to gather. The morning services were set for ten o'clock. Prior to the sermon there was always a half-hour of singing, accompanied by the organ. The Indians loved dearly these seasons of song, and many came to listen to the music who did not remain to the other services. In the afternoon the Sunday-school was held. At that time, too, there was more singing and more playing

upon the organ, and crowds of the Indians attended.

The church building was quite small. It hardly accommodated the Indians who already came. How fervently the good missionary was hoping and praying that the Mission Board could see its way clear to enlarging it. If they did not soon do this, he would have to take his congregation out of doors. This would surely do very well for the summer, but it was not to be thought of for the winter. The blasts of those prairies were too keen and icy for outdoor preaching.

It was a quaint sight to see the mothers coming with their babies upon their backs in their long board cradles with the ends sticking up above their heads like the horns of animals! There the little fellow lay with his back to his mother's, and his eyes blinking at the sun. When the church was reached she propped him up against the end of the bench on which she took her seat. But if there chanced to be no space for her at the end of the bench, where she could sit and watch him, she took him in between the benches and sat him straight up in front of her, holding him in this position by means of the horns of the cradle, her head peering out above his!

Most of these women had their necks and

faces horribly smeared with paint; so also were the eyes and cheeks of the babies. All but one or two were in their camp dress. This generally consisted of a short skirt, falling not more than half-way below the knees, moccasins gaily beaded, leggings trimmed with feathers and shells, and a strip of calico folded in the middle, with openings for the head and arms, and belted about the waist. Over all, if the weather was chilly, was draped a blanket, with picturesque folds about shoulders and head, its ends falling almost to their heels. Nearly all of them had short hair, thick, and straight, and black. About the crown of the head there was a smearing of paint. This was generally in the form of rings, inside of which were dots, and curves, and half-circles, some of them intended to represent animals' eyes.

On the other hand, the men wore their hair long, in plaits hanging down their backs. Nearly all of them had the tail of some animal woven in at the end of the plaits. They, too, had on moccasins and leggings and blankets. Some were in full war dress, and as they walked, the numerous shells, beads, buttons, and teeth of animals, with which they had adorned themselves from head to toe, made a sharp, clanking sound. Eagle feathers were in their hair, and knives and pistols at their belt. Some

even carried a spear, which they leaned against the wall as they took their seats.

Altogether, it was a scene but little suggestive of the true mission upon which these savage creatures had come—that of hearing preached the gentle gospel of the Prince of Love and Peace. But, as barbarous as was their appearance; as savage as seemed their surroundings; as wild, nay, even warlike, as was their mode of dress; as hard and forbidding as appeared the faces of many of them, yet some of these very same savages had again and again showed what power the gospel of Jesus the Saviour had to reach and stir their hearts. The missionary had seen them when they had been as trees swayed by the wind; when the fountains behind those seemingly hard and barbarously painted eyes had been broken up, and the tears had stolen like rain down their brilliantly dyed cheeks.

There was some sweet singing, one song in particular that seemed to stir them, “Jesus Lover of my Soul,” alternately in Kiowa and Comanche. Emma Melville was at the organ, and never had she tried to make the music sound sweeter than to-day. It seemed to her, since the experiences of yesterday, that it meant so much more. Two or three of the Christian Indian women and girls and one or two of the

men sat with her to help her sing. There were also a few of the young people from the families at the Agency.

The missionary had his two best interpreters with him, Brother Andres and Charlie Ahatone. After the singing he made a talk specially to the young people. This talk Charlie interpreted for him. It was an earnest plea to them to start now in the good way, while they were young and could easily follow it. If they waited until they were old, it would be harder, for then their feet would have grown so accustomed to walking in the old ways of sin that it would be difficult to turn them aside. He ended by begging all who were interested in what he had said, and who truly wanted to find the good way and to walk therein, to come out to the Sunday-school services that afternoon.

Then he began his sermon to all, or, rather, his talk, for it could not really be called a sermon. Andres interpreted for him, and how clearly and beautifully he did it! The talk was all about a loving Father and his Son. This Father, it seemed, was the very same that the Indians had long worshipped as the Great Spirit, only they had not known him in the right way, nor worshipped him as he wanted to be worshipped. They had stood in great awe of him, and had looked upon him as a

dreadful being, who spoke to them only in the deep thunder, and sent his lightnings to show that he was angry. Instead of thus keeping away from him and standing in awe of him, he wanted them to draw near; to feel that he was indeed their loving Father, and that they were his children; more, he wanted them to love and trust him.

Many of the Indians were astonished at this, but some, who had before heard of this loving Father, bent nearer and listened all the more attentively. A few were truly surprised to hear that both the red man and the white man had the same Father. This was indeed news to them.

Among the latter were A-chon-ho-ah and Atogeer. They had really come to the services. Ton-ke-a-bau had at last consented, though he had warned them from the start that he would not have any of the foolishness they heard at the church repeated on their return to the teepee. They were glad to go upon any terms, so they accepted this condition readily.

Emma had noticed them when they first came in, and her heart was truly glad. She managed to give them a little nod of recognition from her seat at the organ. Andres, too, had caught sight of them, and he looked at them very earnestly many times while he was interpreting.

114 *How A-chon-ho-ah Found the Light.*

When the good missionary said that about the red man and the white man having the same Father, how it stirred the hearts of A-chon-ho-ah and Atogeer! Could this really be true?

The good missionary continued: "This Great Spirit, whom we call God, the Father of the red man and of the white—the Father, indeed, of all who are on the earth—this Great Spirit loves all mankind, and it is in love that he wants them to come to him, and not in fear. So well, in truth, does he love his children, that, rather than have them die in sin and be lost, as they once came very near to doing, he sent his only Son to bear upon himself the burden of their sins, and to die for them, that they might in this way be saved, through repentance and faith in the blood which he shed for them.

"This Jesus, the Son whom the Father sent, is called the Saviour of men, because he came to *save* them from their sins.

"When he had finished his work here on earth, which was to teach men the way, the truth, and the life, he went back again to heaven, and he is there now, ready and waiting to hear all who call upon him. It is true that he was put to death by cruel men, but he broke the bonds of death, came up out of the grave, and ascended unto his Father. Oh!

what cannot this great and loving Jesus do for you, who could triumph over even death; who could overcome even the darkness of the grave, and cause a glad light to shine therefrom?"

There was a chorus of earnest approval and many hearty shakes of the head at these words. Several seemed deeply impressed; none more so than A-chon-ho-ah, child though she was.

There it is again, she thought, at mention of this wonderful Jesus and of the light he has brought. What a great light it must be if it could overcome even the darkness of the grave! A-chon-ho-ah leaned forward eagerly to hear more.

"Oh, gracious and loving indeed is this Jesus, the Saviour of men," continued the missionary. "He came in love to die for sinful man, and in love he still pleads with his Father for all who go astray. He came to bring light and peace and joy to all who had wandered in darkness; and light and peace and joy he still gives to all who believe in him. But this is not the best part. Listen! This Jesus, the Son of God and Saviour of men, is to come again, to come again some day—it may not be very far away—to come again to meet all who have truly loved and served him here, and to bless and to make, oh, so joyous and glad and so full of light the

hearts of those who have so faithfully watched for his coming!"

A-chon-ho-ah's heart almost went up through her throat at these words. So Dau-ka-ye was to come again! He had not, then, gone away for good! She would yet see him! When that time came, the time she was to see him, then the light would be hers. Oh, what a precious light this must be—this light that could make bright even the dark grave! She wondered *when* Dau-ka-ye would come. She hoped it would be soon, for, oh, she did want to see him *so* much!

Somehow, when A-chon-ho-ah thought of Dau-ka-ye, she thought of the mountains around her home, or, that is, around the spot where the greater portion of her time was passed and that she knew as home. This spot was amid the pasture lands, in full view of the blue line of the Wichita peaks, and in their midst the towering cone of Mt. Scott. How fervently A-chon-ho-ah loved the mountains! this one peak particularly. It seemed as an old and tried friend, a true, good friend, to whom she could tell her joys and sorrows and be sure of interest and sympathy. Day after day she had lain upon her back amid the tall, waving grasses with her eyes fixed upon this peak, beautiful, graceful, towering, its summit

seeming to meet and mingle with the sky that bent above it. To A-chon-ho-ah there was something about this mountain altogether different from any other she had ever seen. It was doubtless because it was the tallest mountain she knew. Sometimes it seemed to her that its peak must surely be looking into that land where the Great Spirit lived of whom A-chon-ho-ah had heard. Now, as she thought of Dau-ka-ye and of his coming, A-chon-ho-ah thought, too, of the mountain.

“Oh, it will surely be upon the mountain that he will come!” she said to herself. “It is there that we shall see him first; I feel it! I know it! He will kindle there the beautiful light, and then he will come down from his throne. Oh, how I wish I could see the mountain now! I will watch it every day when we go back.”

The missionary had ceased speaking, but he had left a precious ray of light in A-chon-ho-ah's heart. Before, all had been *so* dark. That was when she had thought Dau-ka-ye had gone away from the world, never to return. But now that he was coming back, how happy she was! As long as he was out of this world, she did not see how it was possible for him to be reached and the light to be found; but now that he was coming back into it, then, indeed,

he could be seen, and the precious light, too, that he brought. All was not darkness now. There was a ray amid the gloom—the ray of hope.

After the services were over, the missionary went around among his congregation, shaking hands with all who would do so.

A-chon-ho-ah and Atogeer did not wait for him to come to them, but went to him instead. He remembered his little acquaintance of the day before, and greeted her warmly. He also shook hands earnestly with Atogeer, and told her he was glad she had come to the church.

“And has my little friend yet managed to read in the book I gave her?” he asked, holding A-chon-ho-ah’s hand, and gazing straight down into her eyes.

“Oh, yes, sir; I have read it twice, every bit of what you marked for me. I can do that very well now, since your daughter read it to me and helped me to know the words.”

“Yes, Emma told me that. I am so glad she went home with you. I have promised her that we will go together next time.”

“Oh, sir, I should like that *so* much!” A-chon-ho-ah’s eyes filled with tears at the thought, but they were tears of joy.

“How many days will you yet be at the Agency?” he turned to ask of Atogeer.

"I think, about five more. To-morrow is the issue, you know. After that it will take us about four days to get the meat stripped and dried so we can move it."

"Well, I can surely come by that time. So, look out for me, my little friend."

"Did your husband give his consent to your coming to-day?" he suddenly asked of Atogeer.

"Yes, sir, after a time; but he was very particular in saying that he didn't want anything we saw or heard talked about after we got back to the camp. He doesn't like to hear about such things. Somehow they anger him."

The missionary sighed, and, as though to relieve his mind of this unpleasant picture, turned to A-chon-ho-ah, saying, with a smile: "Have you the little book I gave you?"

"Oh, yes, sir!" she answered, quickly and gladly, taking it from her little beaded pouch as she spoke.

"Well, then, I will mark you another place; nay, two. You must read them over as best you can, and when my daughter and myself come we, too, will read them to you, and make them just as clear as we can make them."

He took the little Testament, opened it, and, glancing through its pages, marked carefully two passages, put a little slip of paper in between the pages at each place, and handed

the book back to her. The passages were from the first through the sixteenth verse of the fifth chapter of St. Matthew, and from the sixteenth through the twenty-third verse of the sixth chapter, all from Christ's Sermon on the Mount.

As he was handing the book back, Emma approached. She had been detained by a little crowd that had gathered around the organ, or she would have greeted them sooner.

"I am so glad to see you," said she, heartily, as she warmly shook the hand of each; "so glad that you could come."

"Yes, I am glad too," A-chon-ho-ah returned, "for we did want to come *so* much, my mother as well as I. We were so happy when my father at last said we could come. My mother was so interested in what you read at the tepee."

She said this in a low tone as she approached nearer to Emma. A glad light came swiftly to Emma's eyes. What good news this was!

"I am so pleased to hear that," she said, softly. "I hope you can get your mother to come again to the church."

"Oh, she would come quickly enough if only she had a chance, but in five days more we'll be gone. I heard her tell your father so," and A-chon-ho-ah ended the words with a sigh.

"That is too bad! How far away will you be when you are at home; I mean at the place where you stay for the most part of the time?"

"It is about fifty miles, I think; maybe it is a little more, but, I think, fifty miles."

"That is indeed a good distance, too far I fear to come to church regularly. But some of the Indians come almost that far now and then," she added, suddenly.

"Do they?"

A-chon-ho-ah seemed astonished.

"Yes; there was one old woman here last Sunday. My father told me about her. She had come more than thirty miles, getting up in the night to start. Only a small boy was with her. Another came twenty-five miles, and, what was more, she walked it, taking two days to do so. She had two rivers to wade, and was all wet and bedraggled when she came. My mother gave her clean, dry clothes, she was so touched at what the woman had done."

A-chon-ho-ah was certainly interested; she was touched, too.

"How earnest they must be to come like that and so far!" she said, quickly. "But my father would not let us do anything like that, even if we wanted to. He is very particular."

"But you will come again next issue?" inquired Emma, suddenly.

"No, we may not. My father will doubtless come in the wagon. He often does that way. It is less trouble, he says, than to move, for he can then sleep in the other tepees with his friends."

"It is too bad that you will not come again soon. But, A-chon-ho-ah, you must not forget what you have heard here to-day, or anything my father has said to you. Remember, we are both coming to see you before you go away. And, A-chon-ho-ah, be sure to read the little book he gave you all you can."

"That I will," promised A-chon-ho-ah.

"He marked another place for you, did he not?"

"Yes, two places. He said he would explain them to me when he came."

"I know they are both something beautiful. You must be sure to read them as soon as you get to the tepee, A-chon-ho-ah."

"I will try to read them even before that. I will try to read one of them, at least, as I go along on my pony."

"How earnest you are, A-chon-ho-ah! Are you not coming to the Sunday-school this afternoon?"

A-chon-ho-ah's eyes fell; her lips seemed to be going to quiver, only she held herself back firmly.

"I'm afraid I cannot. My father said this morning that we could come only once to-day."

"That is too bad! But I hope that even the 'once' has done much good, A-chon-ho-ah. Does it seem clearer now about Dau-ka-ye?"

"Oh, yes, it does!" cried A-chon-ho-ah, suddenly, her eyes brightening.

"I am *so* glad, A-chon-ho-ah!"

"He is coming back, you know," A-chon-ho-ah continued; "then it will be easy to see him. Before, it was so dark, because A-chon-ho-ah did not understand how it was possible to find the light unless he came back to bring it."

Emma looked a little perplexed. She did not quite comprehend the drift of A-chon-ho-ah's remarks. When she understood them more clearly, she said: "But it may be a long, long time ere he comes, A-chon-ho-ah, even after A-chon-ho-ah has gone away from this world herself. How much better to find the light *now*, A-chon-ho-ah, and not to wait!"

"But how *can* it be found until he comes to bring it?" A-chon-ho-ah asked, her mind back again amid its old uncertain gropings with the thick shadows. "I do not understand. It is all so dark when I try to think of it that way. I cannot see how it is to be. No, no, no! I *must* wait for his coming. He surely *will* come."

The good missionary said so this very morning. Oh! how much better it is for me to think of it in that way! It puts such a bright ray of light here," placing her hand upon her heart, "and makes A-chon-ho-ah look forward with such sweet hope."

Atogeer now came up to hasten A-chon-ho-ah home. The missionary had carried her towards the rear of the church, so as to meet his wife, and during the past ten or fifteen minutes they had been talking very earnestly together. Thus Emma and A-chon-ho-ah had been alone through most of their conversation.

Emma's eyes had a sad expression as she watched A-chon-ho-ah leave the church. How great was the darkness yet in which she dwelt! But A-chon-ho-ah herself did not think so; indeed, her heart at that moment was in a burst of gladness because of that same precious ray which had come to dwell in her breast. How much clearer everything was now! Before, all had been so dark; now this same sweet ray of light made such gladness in her heart—the gladness of hope!

CHAPTER VII.

WHAT A-CHON-HO-AH SAW ISSUE-DAY.

THE next day began the regular semi-monthly issue of provisions to the Indians, hence it was called Issue-Day. This occurred on the first and middle of each month. Then upwards of four thousand Indians gathered at the Agency, men, women, and children. They were here now in full force—nay, in more than usual force, for this Issue-Day marked a double occasion. Not only were the Indians to draw their regular allowance of provisions, etc., but they were also to receive their “grass-money.” This “grass-money” is paid the Indians by the Texas Cattle Company, to whom the Indians lease a large portion of their lands for grazing purposes. The money is paid semi-annually at the Anadarko Agency, every man, woman, and child getting at each payment as much as ten dollars apiece. Over forty thousand dollars are thus paid out, and it is indeed a grand occasion for the Indians. But it is a grander one for the store-keepers. Then money flows freely. Being highly improvident, the Indian knows not how

to value his good fortune when he receives it. Generally, he parts with his full ten dollars for the first article or articles that strike his fancy. Now and then, however, one is more careful, and makes good use of his "grass-money." But this is the exception.

The issue of provisions by the Government takes place from what is known as the supply-houses. These are two long shed-like buildings standing near the upper end of the Agency, and piled from floor to ceiling with bags of flour, boxes of soda and soap, bins of sugar and coffee, and barrels of vinegar, dried fruit, etc. The amount issued to each Indian is five pounds of flour, one pound of sugar, one-half pound of coffee, one pound of salt, two pounds of fruit, one pound of soap, and one-eighth of a pound of soda. In addition to this, from one hundred and seventy-five to two hundred beeves are delivered to the Indians from the pens. These pens are situated about a half-mile from the supply-houses.

The men do not condescend to receive the provisions. The women and girls are sent to attend to this. It is indeed an amusing sight to see the many and varied receptacles into which these provisions are poured and then borne away. Sometimes it is an old skirt tied together at one end, or, again, a breeches leg,

or part of a shirt, maybe the sleeves. When these are stuffed with flour they indeed present a comical sight. Sometimes a woman is seen with flour and baby wrapped in the same shawl.

On this particular Issue-Day Mr. Melville went early to the supply-houses, taking John and Emma with him. John had a little kodak with which he wanted to take some pictures to send to friends in his old home, and maybe, too, to the missionary magazines, if they turned out to be real good ones.

"I don't believe you will be able to get very good pictures, John," said his father; "the scenes shift so. Whatever you do, don't let the Indians get a clear view of the box. You know their superstition with reference to boxes, especially black ones. They'd be sure to think this was a box of bad medicine, and that you were trying to put a spell upon them. We must be careful not to get their enmity in any way."

"I'll be careful, father," assured John.

He was a tall, manly-looking lad, a year or so older than his sister. He had his father's bright, clear eyes and earnest way of speaking. He had, too, his father's soft, fair hair, and fine, broad brow.

"I want specially to catch a picture of the Caddoes," he continued. "You know how slippery they are; you never can put your

hand on one when you want him. Father, what makes them seem to have such a terror of the white people? downright aversion, too, it seems. You know, one of them rarely ever comes about the mission-station."

"Yes, I have noticed this, and regret it," his father returned. "I don't know why they have such a dislike to the white people, or rather fear of them. They are exceedingly superstitious, perhaps the most superstitious of any of the Indians, and they lead very degraded lives. Just now they are giving the white people at the Agency a great deal of uneasiness. I wish something could be done."

He seemed to speak more to himself than to John, but John replied quickly by asking a question: "What is it, father, they are doing?"

"They are engaging in what is called ghost dancing. Every night numbers of the other Indians go over the mountains to see them. These dances are exceedingly demoralizing, and many of the other Indians are catching the fever of them. Some nights the wild revels are kept up until daylight. The Agent sent one or two of the Indian police to see what could be done, but the police instead of making things better made them worse. Indeed, the Caddoes and their friends were

greatly incensed against the Agent, and questioned his authority. It may yet lead to an outbreak."

"Too bad," said John; "but hasn't the Agent the authority to put down the revels, father?"

"Yes, if they disturb the peace and threaten the welfare of anyone. But such things have to be handled delicately. The Indian is ready for a quarrel with the white man any time, and where he so far outnumbered him, a hundred or more to one, caution has to be mixed with justice. Why, here are our friends again!" he broke off, at the same time turning to shake hands with A-chon-ho-ah and Atogeer, who had just ridden up on their ponies.

"That is a very bright-looking little girl," said John, as Atogeer and A-chon-ho-ah passed on, after a few moments' conversation.

"That she is," returned Emma. "I was over at their tepee Saturday. They live very well indeed, and A-chon-ho-ah said and did many things that surprised me, as I wasn't expecting them from one brought up in the camps as she has been. But, then, she has been for several terms to the government schools, and certainly has improved her opportunities."

Atogeer and A-chon-ho-ah rode on towards

the supply-house. They had brought clean, white sacks of canvas for their supplies. As they approached the door where the streams of women were pouring, the one in and the other out, A-chon-ho-ah was distressed to see two women fighting over some flour they were endeavoring to carry away between them. The flour was in an old pair of breeches, one leg of which had been cut half away. It seems that neither woman wanted to bear the weight of the longer and heavier leg, and both were contending for the shorter and lighter one.

"I wish they wouldn't fight that way!" said A-chon-ho-ah. "What makes them? It is too bad! I feel sure white people wouldn't do so."

Her mother looked at her with a little frown.

"No; you are not sure of that," she said. "I don't believe the white people are perfect any more than the Indians."

"I reckon not, mother, not perfect. But, then, they have better ways, and they seem to get along with each other much more kindly."

"You are not with them much, and you see only from the outside, A-chon-ho-ah. I do not like to hear you talk about your people that way," and again Atogeer frowned.

"Oh, mother, I meant no harm! But I do hate to see them act as they do. Just look,

now, what the women have done—or rather, one of them!”

Atogeer turned her head. It certainly was a scene to call for reproof, that upon which she looked. One of the women, growing quite angry, had suddenly drawn a knife from her waist, and, with a lunge in the direction of the pants legs, had severed one from the other. Of course, the flour went pouring out of both legs all over the ground. But this seemed to make no difference to the woman. Quickly shouldering the shorter leg, and totally unmindful of the waste, she marched triumphantly away.

“I think she ought to be told how ugly she behaved!” said A-chon-ho-ah, positively.

“She certainly does deserve speaking to,” assented Atogeer. “I am sorry for the woman who is left. She seems to be having a time with the leg.”

“I will give her a string from my saddle to tie it up with,” said A-chon-ho-ah, and suiting action to word, she rode nearer and sprang from her pony, string in hand. The woman certainly was glad to get it, and muttered her thanks as she tied up the unwieldy leg, looking regretfully at the flour scattered over the ground, and which she had made an effort in part to gather up.

As A-chon-ho-ah returned to her mother she saw an old squaw standing beside her, wringing her hands and telling a most pitiful story. She had been playing a game called Gu-del-pha, it seemed, with three other squaws. It was a gambling game, and she had lost every cent of her "grass-money."

As she had pledged this same money to her husband to help buy a pony, and he had threatened her with what he would do if she did not keep her pledge, she was now in great straits with reference to it. She had hoped to win instead of losing, and thus to have some money of her own after giving her husband the ten. The same fever that urged on other gamblers, the fever of gain, had taken possession of her, too. She was now entreating Atogeer to go with her to see the women, and to help her beg them to return the money.

"Oh! he will beat me! he will beat me!" she wailed, referring to her husband.

While she was at the height of her distress, and still entreating Atogeer, the missionary came up. He made it a point on these days always to be abroad, and to mingle with the Indians. He hoped in this way to know them better, and to be known of them. He wanted them all to feel that he was their friend; that he was ready to listen to their joys or sorrows,

and that he was ready, too, to help them when he could. But he had a deeper motive still: he hoped to reach them with the precious truths of eternal life, and to fill their darkened minds with the blessed rays of the gospel light. Thus, when he saw the poor old squaw in distress, he went quickly towards her.

"What is it, Wau-we-so," he asked, "what is it that has troubled you?"

The squaw stopped gesticulating, and turned her face towards him: "Wau-we-so miserable! Wau-we-so ready to die! All her money gone! Ten dollars in all! Gone at Gu-del-pha! Wau-we-so had promised it to Tau-ke-no for pony. Now money gone, he beat Wau-we-so to death! Wau-we-so wish she could die!" and she fell to swinging her hands again wildly in the air, first up, and then down.

"Where did she lose her money?" he asked of Atogeer, "to whom? and when?"

She answered the last question first: "It was only a little while ago, and it was to those squaws over there behind the big box, with the blankets spread out before them."

"Come, Wau-we-so," he said to the squaw, "and show me which ones they were who got your money."

He beckoned to Charlie Ahatone, who was a few paces away from him, and, followed by the

old squaw, he approached the women. They were all young women, and three in number. They had their shawls and a blanket spread out beneath and before them, and were sitting in a half-circle about a flat stone, placed at an equal distance from each one. They had five flat, oblong sticks, about six inches in length and two in width. One side of these sticks was painted red and the other black. They held the sticks in their hand, poised above the stone. Then, with a little movement, they flung them upon the stone. If a stick fell with the black side up, it counted nothing; if with the red side, then it was five. Whoever scored one hundred first had the game and whatever had been put up by the others.

There was a small pile of money lying near the centre of the blankets. As the approach of Mr. Melville and Charlie Ahatone was observed, one of the squaws quickly raked the money out of sight beneath her skirt. Then they went on playing, apparently in the most innocent manner.

"Are these the women, Wau-we-so?" Mr. Melville asked in a low tone. She nodded her head.

Mr. Melville drew near, and bending toward the women said, kindly: "This poor old woman has lost her money, all that she had. She is

terribly distressed. I think it was all in a joke that you took it from her. I feel sure you will now give it back to her, especially when you learn that her husband will beat her almost to death if she does not carry it to him."

Two of the women were Kiowa, the other an Apache. As the latter did not seem to understand, he motioned to Charlie to interpret for him.

"I am sure you will give the old woman her money," he said again, persuasively.

The squaws preserved a sullen silence, and went on with their game.

Seeing that heroic measures were necessary, Mr. Melville continued: "As I came up I caught sight of a pile of money, so did my friend, Charlie, here. The money is now under the skirt of that squaw," pointing toward one of them as he spoke. "You know the law is that no playing for money must be carried on in the Government grounds. Give the money to the squaw here from whom you have taken it, and nothing will be said of it, at least not this time. Only," he added, determinedly, "it must not occur again. It is not only wrong to break the law," he continued, in a kinder tone, "but it is also sinful to play this game in order to win money. Let me beg you not to do it again. It can bring no good to you, but only

sorrow, and, perhaps, great trouble. See what it has done for this poor woman here. She is wringing her hands in the deepest grief, and weeping as though her heart would break. Nor does it end here. She knows that she will be beaten, perhaps nearly to death, when she goes back to her tepee, and all because she has lost the money. Will you not stop this by giving her back the money?"

One of the squaws seemed touched at last. She looked around at the others and murmured something. One resolutely shook her head; the other seemed undecided.

Mr. Melville had noticed that when he spoke of the law it had had a visible effect upon each one. He now resolved to return to that point; only he felt he must do so gently, because he did not want to make enemies of the women.

"You know, I could inform upon you," he said, kindly, "for gambling here in the Government grounds, and you would be arrested and doubtless made to pay a fine. But I don't want to do that. I don't want to see you in trouble, even though you have done wrong, for I bear you no ill-will, none whatever. Only return the money to the old woman, and nothing more will be said."

He paused a moment, intently regarding them. He seemed to have reached them at

last. Fear had proven a more powerful incentive than pity. They consulted together for a few moments; then each threw down upon the blankets the amount she had won from Wauwe-so, at the same time motioning her to take it away. This she did without a second bidding.

"And now," continued Mr. Melville, looking toward them kindly, "let me beg you not to play this game any more for money. Oh, it is *so* wrong! and it will have such a bad effect upon you. Money gained in this way can bring no good to its winner. Sooner or later you will find that out. I wish you well, believe me, or I would not have talked to you in this way."

With these words he turned and left them. Charlie lingered, and seemed to be talking to them earnestly. Mr. Melville walked back towards the front entrance of the supply-house, near which he had left John and Emma. Wauwe-so kept close beside him. The old woman was very grateful, and murmured her thanks over and over again. She would have taken his hand and kissed it had he allowed it.

Atogeer and A-chon-ho-ah were just going to their ponies with their bags of supplies. The old woman made her way quickly towards them, and began pouring out the story of what the missionary had done for her, at the same

time holding up the money. Both seemed greatly pleased that the old woman had come out of her troubles.

"He is certainly a good man," said Atogeer, looking toward the missionary.

"That he is, mother!" exclaimed A-chon-ho-ah. "Oh, I am *so* glad he is coming to our tepee! Do you think my father will be cross to him if he is there?" she asked, suddenly, and a little anxiously.

"I do not know; but I hope not. I will tell him what he did to-day for old Wau-we-so, and then I am sure your father will think better of him."

Mother and daughter rode back to their tepee to deposit their supplies. After that they were going to the pens to see about the butchering.

All the way to the tepee A-chon-ho-ah was thinking of the missionary, and of what she had seen and heard at the supply-house. How good he was, and how ready to sympathize with and to help those who were in trouble! He surely was a friend to the Indian. Everybody must see that. How sorry she was that they were going away where she would not see him again for a long time.

All the men were gathered about the pens, many hundreds of them. They were mounted on their ponies, with pistols and knives in their

belts and guns slung across the bows of their saddles. They were resplendent in paints and feathers, beads, and all the paraphernalia of full war-dress. They presented a dazzling picture as the sun flashed upon them. Many of them had on their war-bonnets. These consisted of a helmet-like hat for the head, with a pendant of buckskin, beads, and eagle feathers falling down their backs, and almost to the horses' knees.

The men were divided into bands known as "beef bands." Each band had its chief, who guided and directed everything: the chase when the cows were being run down and tortured, and the distribution of the beef after it was butchered. The cows were let out of the pen, so many to each band. Instantly the men on the ponies, with loud war-whoops and yells, dashed into the midst of the poor brutes, frightening them so that they set off wildly across the plains. In order to make the chase all the more exciting, they were stung with small shot, not badly crippled, but wounded—wounded just enough to madden and torture them. After they had been chased in this manner for an hour or more, and the chase had lost its excitement through the spirit of the animals having given out, either from exhaustion or pain from their wounds, then they were shot

down, and the women were left to do the butchering.

It was a terrible and a shocking sight—sickening, too, to eyes unused to it, and even to those that were. Many of the poor, tortured cows would run for miles with the blood streaming from their nostrils. Sometimes they would endeavor to make their way back to the Government pens, as though with the hope of finding shelter and safety there. On such occasions, if they did reach the pens or their vicinity, they were mercifully slain by some one of the Government officials.

The most horrible sight was to see the squaws doing the butchering. As soon as the cow was shot down, they gathered about it, usually four of them. Sometimes the skinning began ere the animal was quite dead. The women plunged their long, keen knives into its quivering body; liver and lights were taken out smoking hot, and in this condition they were eaten. Strips were also thrown to the children and dogs who stood around. Many old people gathered to secure the offals. As much strength was needed for certain parts of the butchering, the squaws bared their arms to the shoulders. As they were not careful, face, hands, and arms were generally thickly smeared with blood ere they were through.

A-chon-ho-ah and Atogeer walked towards the pen, after leaving their supplies and the ponies at the tepees. They would have no need for the ponies now; indeed, they would be in the way in the work now before them. The band to which Ton-ke-a-bau belonged had already received its beeves, and the men were now chasing them over the plains with wild whoops and yells.

Atogeer and A-chon-ho-ah had not more than reached the pen, when Ton-ke-a-bau came dashing up on his pony. The cow from which their portion of beef was to come had already been shot down. He told them it was over in the hollow, about a half-mile away. He had come to lead them to it. So, he set off on his pony, his wife and daughter following him. They had gone only a little distance when a poor, tortured beast, half mad with pain and fright, came dashing towards them. Behind it galloped two or three men on horse-back, brandishing their guns and yelling like the wild creatures they were. The cow had been shot both in the head and throat, and the blood was pouring from its mouth and nostrils. A-chon-ho-ah and Atogeer quickly got out of the way, or the tortured beast might have trampled them.

“Oh, why do they not kill it and put an end

to its sufferings?" cried A-chon-ho-ah, shutting out the sight with the fold of her blanket. "It is so cruel to do this way!"

But the men evidently had no such intention as killing it, at least not then; on the other hand, they seemed desirous of torturing it still further. But ere they could do so a Government employee ran up, pistol in hand, and quickly put an end to the poor beast's sufferings.

A-chon-ho-ah shuddered as she heard the pistol shots, but she was glad, indeed, it had been done.

On their way to the cow that Ton-ke-a-bau had killed they passed by several women engaged in cutting up beeves. Somehow to-day their occupation looked unusually forbidding to A-chon-ho-ah. It was so terrible to see them get their faces and arms all smeared with the blood in this way. It gave them such a horrible look. She made up her mind that she would suggest to her mother, when they came to the cutting up of their own cow, that they be just as careful as they could, and not get their faces and hands in such a state.

A-chon-ho-ah almost ran over an old woman who was crouched in the grass and ravenously gnawing upon a piece of raw liver she had secured. A-chon-ho-ah also noticed a collection of offals in the grass at her side.

Here was another thing that stirred her heart with a new feeling. These old people had such a dreadful time. No one seemed to care for them. Indeed, it was quite apparent that they were wished out of the way. They were hardly ever fed as they ought to be fed, but were left to pick up their living as best they could. It seemed hard to treat them this way, especially those that were helpless and could do nothing for themselves. But she had heard it said that old people brought bad luck, as the evil spirits came to dwell with them after they were aged. Thus those with whom they lived were anxious to get rid of them. But, somehow, A-chon-ho-ah couldn't help but pity them, especially now since she had heard the missionary speak of that wonderful Dau-ka-ye, who loved everything and everybody, and was anxious to save them from all their troubles. Of course, this meant that he loved the old people, too, for had not the missionary said that he loved *everybody*, and came to die for *all*? At any rate, A-chon-ho-ah made up her mind that she would be kinder to the old people than she had yet been. Not that she had ever been really cruel to any of them; only careless and indifferent. Now she would try to be more considerate of them, for did not Dau-ka-ye love them? What a glorious thing it was to

be loved by Dau-ka-ye! especially as he had promised a beautiful light to all who loved him in return. A-chon-ho-ah was quite sure she loved him then, even though she had never seen him. How much more she would love him when he came and her eyes could look upon him!

But A-chon-ho-ah's thoughts came back again to the aged. The sight of the old woman crouched in the grass and gnawing away so ravenously upon the liver had moved her heart as it had not been moved in a long time by anything similar. The whole attitude of the old woman suggested haste and fear. She was evidently afraid that some one would discover her and drive her away, and maybe take her precious feast from her ere she had finished it. A-chon-ho-ah resolved that if any old people came around them while they were cutting up their beef, she would beg her mother to give them not only pieces of the liver, but also some of the beef, to carry home with them. Then they would surely have a chance to cook and eat it.

A-chon-ho-ah saw many more distressing scenes that day. She had witnessed almost the same things before—many times before. But, somehow, they seemed different to-day from what they had ever been. Some of them

quite sickened her heart, as, for instance, the torturing of the cows. Again and again men on horseback came flying by in hot pursuit of some poor beast or beasts blinded with blood, staggering from weakness and pain, and already so near death they could hardly run. A-chon-ho-ah, after the first glimpse, could not bear to look at them. She wondered how she had ever looked at them at all. Two or three times her mother had to speak to her. Her hand trembled so she could hardly perform the lighter tasks she was set to do.

In the midst of it all A-chon-ho-ah kept thinking of one verse in that last reading the good missionary had marked for her in the little Testament. Somehow, this verse took closer hold upon A-chon-ho-ah than any of the others. She had managed to spell it out very well, and to understand it partly, too. But she understood it fully now, for she had asked the missionary about it that morning when he had stopped to speak to them at the supply-house, and he had explained it to her. The verse was this: "*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*"

Oh, how cruel it seemed to torture the poor cows this way! They could surely be shot down at once without all this wounding and giving of lingering pain. The white people did

not do so. A-chon-ho-ah had seen two of the Government employees butchering a cow for the use of the Agent and his family. They had killed the poor thing at once. The good missionary had said that "merciful" meant to be kind and gentle, to take care not to give pain needlessly, to pity others, and to do all we could to relieve their woes. The Indians surely did not do that way. They were not kind to the aged, and they gave such pain to the poor cows that they chased over the plains as though they were really wild creatures, and could not be slain in any other way. If they (the Indians) were not merciful, kind, gentle, pitiful—would Dau-ka-ye be kind to them when he came? This question worried A-chon-ho-ah very much. She loved her people, and she wanted to see them happy and blessed—blessed by that great and wonderful Dau-ka-ye when he came. But did not the book say that we must be merciful if we would have mercy in return?

A-chon-ho-ah had occasion to go to the Agency again that day. She rode hither from the tepee on her pony. The road she took this time lay directly by the mission-house gate. Just in front of the gate there was a little group, composed principally of the missionary's children, only the two older ones being absent. A tiny calf lay upon the ground, and over it the

children were bending. There was a fresh wound upon its neck, which was bleeding considerably. It had doubtless received it in attempting to push its head through the strands of the barbed wire fence. The children were crying over the calf, and while one endeavored to stop the flow of the blood by means of some soft cloth bunched together in the hand, another was preparing to rub salve upon the wound.

Glover recognized A-chon-ho-ah as she came near, and, looking up, spoke to her.

"What is the matter with the little calf?" she asked, kindly.

"It ran its head through the fence, and got cut by the sharp points of the wire," answered Glover.

"I am very sorry," said A-chon-ho-ah.

"Thank you," said Glover, with the air of a little gentleman.

"And do you think you can make it well again?"

"Oh, yes, we think that we can; but we are awfully sorry for the poor little thing, for we know that it is suffering." Here Glover's tears broke out afresh.

A-chon-ho-ah rode on, but the remembrance of the tears shed by the missionary's little son over the wounded calf lingered with her for many days. How different this was from the

way the Indian boys acted! They seemed to take such fierce delight in seeing the poor cows wounded, and chased over the plains, and tortured. They even added to the cruelty by joining in the chase, and piercing them with their arrows. It certainly was strange to A-chon-ho-ah, this difference. And through all her thoughts kept ringing, as though a bell itself struck the sound of the words, the verse in the little Testament which the missionary had so fully explained: "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

It was Dau-ka-ye who had said that, and surely he must be very angry with the Indians for acting as they did.

CHAPTER VIII.

"IS DAU-KA-YE REALLY COMING?"

WHEN A-chon-ho-ah went back to her home at the foot of Mt. Scott, she heard some strange, strange news. Her father had been the first to bring it to the camp, but soon all the Indians knew it, and were talking about it, and were much excited. This news had reference to a new Saviour, or Messiah, who was soon to make his appearance. He was even then among the Sioux Indians somewhere in the Northwest, or, at least, so it was said. Wonderful stories were told of the things that he said and did, and of the powers he displayed. He was soon going to appear to all the Indians throughout the country. He was coming upon a great wave of earth resembling an ocean wave. The Indians would remain upon its crest, but the white people would be buried beneath it.

The Indians were endeavoring to prepare themselves for the coming of this wonderful and glorious Messiah by holding dances in his honor. These dances took place every night,

and were marked by the wildest kind of revels.

When A-chon-ho-ah first heard the news of the new Messiah, her heart almost bounded out of her body. She thought, surely it must be Dau-ka-ye. He had come, then, and much sooner than she expected! But, no, it could not be Dau-ka-ye, she concluded, after maturer thought. This was not the way that *he* was to come. The missionary had told her differently. He was to come in the clouds, with the angels with him. How beautifully the missionary had told her the story the afternoon he came to the tepee—the story of this gentle, loving, noble Dau-ka-ye! For the missionary had kept his promise. He had not only come once, but twice, ere they left the Agency. Once he had brought his daughter with him, and the next time Mr. Andres had come.

The story that the missionary had told about Dau-ka-ye, and the way he had pictured his second coming, were very different from these things with reference to the new Messiah. Then, there was that one about the white people being buried beneath the wave on which the Messiah would ride! Dau-ka-ye would not do that way, A-chon-ho-ah felt assured. He would not seek to kill anyone, but rather to save all who came to him trustingly. He would

be the Saviour of both the white man and the Indian. The missionary had said so, and the missionary knew.

But this very characteristic of the pretended Messiah, which made A-chon-ho-ah feel well assured that he was not the real Dau-ka-ye, commended him all the more to the expectant Indians. This was the very quality that they wanted in a Saviour, the inclination, or, rather, the power, to totally sweep the whites from the face of the earth, and to give the Indians full possession; for, despite their outwardly peaceable appearance, hatred of their old enemy still dwelt in many an Indian heart. The powder was ready for the match at any moment.

Ton-ke-a-bau was particularly delighted over the news with reference to the new Messiah.

"It is just what we Indians want," he declared to his wife; "some one to free us from these abominable whites, and to let us have our own in peace."

"I do not see that the whites treat us so very bad," Atogeer replied. "I am sure they are kind to us when we go to the Agency, and they give us plenty to eat."

"Well, what if they do?" returned Ton-ke-a-bau, testily; "haven't they taken our lands away from us? and isn't the white man fast

claiming everything the Indian used to own? Soon it will be our ponies, I suppose, and the very tents that are over our heads. I cannot trust the white man, and I hate him—yes, I *hate* him!” and Ton-ke-a-bau clenched his fist.

“But I thought they paid us for our lands,” said Atogeer, quickly.

“Yes, after a fashion; nothing like they are worth, however. And instead of giving us all money, as man to man, they dole out supplies, as though we were children or slaves, and not able to think or act for ourselves.”

“Some of the Indians are not,” said Atogeer, again. “You must see this yourself. Many of them manage so ill that they get through with two weeks’ provisions in one. That shows they can’t even take care of things when they are given. And when they have a little money they just throw it away.”

“Oh, those are the idiots!” declared Ton-ke-a-bau, complacently. “They really need looking after, and the Government should look after *them*.”

“But it can’t treat these one way and others another. It must deal with all alike.”

Ton-ke-a-bau showed that he was cornered, and he glowered at Atogeer for cornering him.

“Father,” said A-chon-ho-ah, timidly, “please do not say you hate the white people. I know

you do not mean all of them. There are some of them who are quite kind and good to us. I am sure you do not hate the missionary."

A-chon-ho-ah uttered this last sentence more as a question than as an assertion, while her eyes regarded her father wistfully, beseechingly.

"I do not know the missionary," said Ton-ke-a-bau, shortly.

"Oh, I wish you did! It was too bad you were not at the tepee any of the times he came. He did say so many beautiful things, and he asked after you. I am sure he has the kindest feelings towards you, and towards all the rest, for that matter. Father," wistfully, "will you not let me read to you in the little book he left with me?"

"No," declared Ton-ke-a-bau, crustily, "I don't want to hear anything in the book. It's a white man's book, and that's enough."

"Oh, no," she returned, gently, "it is a book for all. The missionary told me so himself. And, father, it has such a beautiful story in it of one who is called Jesus, the Son of God. He has been once on earth, and is coming again—coming to bring us, oh, such a beautiful light! and to take us to live with him in his own home, which is called heaven. That is,"

correcting herself, "he will do this for us if only we are good and try to serve him."

"Does that book really tell of the one who has come?" cried Ton-ke-a-bau, excitedly, "of this one who is even now among the Sioux, and who will soon be here riding upon a great wave, much higher than any tepee has reached? and who is to trample down all the whites and give all this land, from the Big River¹ to the ocean, to the Indians?"

"No," said A-chon-ho-ah, slowly; "it is not of this one. I feel sure it is not. The book tells of Dau-ka-ye, the gentle, loving One, who is to be the Saviour of all, of the white and red alike."

"Then I want nothing to do with it!" declared Ton-ke-a-bau, fiercely. "The Saviour of whom I hear must be the red man's alone."

"But that is not the way with Dau-ka-ye," said A-chon-ho-ah again, gently. "He wants to save *all*. Indeed, he did come once to save all who would believe in him. And, oh, he gave them such a beautiful light when once they believed and trusted him!"

"What kind of a light?" asked Ton-ke-a-bau, quickly.

"Oh, such a lovely, lovely light! It just shone right through the heart, and made every-

¹ The Mississippi.

one to whom he gave it *so* happy. And he is coming again to bring this same light to many who are in darkness."

"Well, this is very strange!" Ton-ke-a-bau said, as though talking to himself. Then louder:

"Why, this Messiah over among the Sioux seems to be full of light. He never appears except in a circle of fire."

A-chon-ho-ah almost started from her seat, so startling was this news.

"Oh, father," she said, "then it *must* be Dau-ka-ye! It could be no one else. But then," musingly, "there is that terrible story about the cruel wave that is to sweep away the white people. The Indians surely have that wrong. Oh, father," speaking again to Ton-ke-a-bau, "will you not go and see what this Messiah is like, and come and tell us?"

"No," said Ton-ke-a-bau, "I must not go, for then I might miss him. I will stay here and wait his coming, for we do not know just what route he will take. There is to be a dance to-night, and I must go and prepare for it."

After ordering Atogeer to get his war costume in readiness, and to have some blue, green, and red paint mixed, Ton-ke-a-bau left the tepee.

Atogeer and A-chon-ho-ah talked long after Ton-ke-a-bau had gone. A-chon-ho-ah still felt a doubt in her mind as to the genuineness

of the Sioux Messiah, or, rather, as to his identity with Dau-ka-ye. The story with reference to the wave and the extermination of the white people perplexed her. But, then, there was what her father had told her about the circle of fire. Whenever she arrived at this point in her thoughts it was always with a strong feeling in her breast that it must be Dau-ka-ye. She read again to her mother all the beautiful passages in the Testament that the missionary had marked, and they talked together of the many sweet things he had told them about Dau-ka-ye and of his second coming.

Atogeer could not help A-chon-ho-ah, nor throw any light upon the matter with reference to the genuineness of the Sioux Messiah. Indeed, she was even more in the dark than her child, for her mind had not yet grasped many things that A-chon-ho-ah's had.

Sadly and thoughtfully A-chon-ho-ah went about her tasks for that morning. When they were finished she made her way to her favorite resort, a grassy knoll at the foot of a little clump of cotton-woods, whence, lying along the fresh, green slope, she could look upward to the tall, imposing summit of Mt. Scott.

To-day more than ever the mountain attracted her. It was very beautiful in its summer verdure, the green of the shrubbery being

dashed here and there with the gleam of scarlet and gold, as vine and flower made their graceful appearance amid the openings. There was one point in particular upon which A-chon-ho-ah fastened her eyes. This was an almost bare spot, a few feet down from the summit, bare as to shrubbery or trees, but literally spangled with wild flowers that crept close to the ground, and seemed as though their colors had been woven into its very soil. No carpet upon a king's floor had richer, deeper tinting. Just above the flowers there was an overhanging ledge. It took no wide scope of the imagination to make this appear a veritable throne to A-chon-ho-ah. It was, indeed, in one sense, a throne,—Nature's throne, and no real and canopied platform of royalty could have been more imposing in A-chon-ho-ah's sight. All about the ledge, above and beyond it, were lovely glistening patches of the flower known as "Snow-on-the-mountain." What could be more suggestive of sweetness and purity? Surely this was to be the throne of Dau-ka-ye, and here he was to make his appearance. On this ledge, with the grand coloring of the wild flowers below him, and the pure white of the blossoms above and to the right and left of him, and the deep blue of the sky bending so that it seemingly almost touched the ledge, here he

would sit and talk to the people gathered below, and reward them according as they deserved. Here, too, the glorious light would shine all about him who was to give it out to others. Of course it would come straight down through the clouds, as the sun came. There was the sun shining now; but, oh, this light that came by Dau-ka-ye was to be so many, many times brighter and more glorious!

"Oh, I am sure that it is here Dau-ka-ye is to first let us see him," said A-chon-ho-ah, "here upon the mountain. He will not have far to come down from the clouds, and he will bring the light with him, the light greater than the sun. Oh, if I can only be here and be one of the first to see him when he comes!"

Always in these dreams of Dau-ka-ye he had such gentle, beautiful eyes. A-chon-ho-ah pictured them to herself again and again. How loving they would be when they spoke to her! for A-chon-ho-ah felt sure he *would* speak to her, speak to her direct. He would say: "A-chon-ho-ah, I have come at last. Receive the light for which you have so long waited."

What joy would be in her heart then! and how eagerly she would go forward to meet him, even though it were up the toilsome mountain slope!

To-day, as she lay upon the grassy knoll with her eyes fixed upon the mountain and thinking these thoughts, she was so absorbed that she did not notice the approach of any one until a voice close beside her said: "What are you watching?"

A-chon-ho-ah turned her head quickly, with a little start. There at her elbow stood Wanda.

"I was watching the mountain."

"Why, what do you see there to make you look so closely?"

"Come, sit down here with me and I will tell you."

As she spoke, A-chon-ho-ah drew herself to a sitting posture, and as Wanda took the place indicated beside her, A-chon-ho-ah clasped the hand of her little playmate in hers.

"I was thinking of one who is soon to come," she said, speaking slowly and earnestly, "of Dau-ka-ye, the Prince of Light, of whom the missionary told us, and of whom we have read in the little Testaments. You remember, Wanda?"

"Oh, yes," cried Wanda, eagerly. "I could never forget *that*! But you have not told me why you were watching the mountain."

"I will now. It seems to me that it is where Dau-ka-ye is first to appear, up there where the flowers are so beautiful and that ledge

looks like a throne," pointing towards it as she spoke. "Is it not lovely?"

"Yes," said Wanda, "it is beautiful. Oh, do you really suppose that he will come there?" her eyes glowing with excitement.

"I really do. It is so near the clouds, he will only have to step right down from them."

"But," said Wanda, after a pause, "it seems that some one like Dau-ka-ye has already come. I heard my father say so. There is one among the Sioux who says he has come to be the Saviour of the Indians."

"I do not believe he is really Dau-ka-ye," said A-chon-ho-ah, positively.

"Why do you think he is not?"

"Because he does not do or talk as the missionary has told us that Dau-ka-ye would. This one seems to be so cruel. It is said that when he comes he will put an end to all the white people."

"That is the reason my father likes him," said Wanda. "Oh, it does seem too bad that my father cannot like the white people, at least some of them. There are the missionary and his wife and his daughter and the little boy; yes, and Mr. Fred and Dr. Holly, and—and—A-chon-ho-ah," suddenly, "is Mr. Andres white?"

"Oh, yes, Wanda, I believe that he is, though

he is not so white as the missionary and the others. Still, he is not an Indian."

"Well, I'd hate awfully to see any of them hurt, especially Mr. Andres."

"So would I," assented A-chon-ho-ah. "Oh! I'd hate it *so* much! And this makes me hope that the one who is really among the Sioux is not Dau-ka-ye."

"But the Indians all think he is, and they are making great preparations for his coming. There is to be a dance at our camp to-night."

"Yes, I know. My father is to attend. I heard him tell my mother to get his war things ready. Oh! I do wonder if this really *is* Dau-ka-ye!"

"You said that it was not," returned Wanda, looking at her in wonder.

"I *hope* it is not. Of course I cannot really tell."

"But you said you did not really believe it *was* Dau-ka-ye," persisted Wanda.

"Yes, I believe it is not, I do, really; but, then, I do not *know*. Oh! no, no, no! I *cannot* believe it is really Dau-ka-ye!" she continued, passionately; "I don't *want* to believe it, for it is so unlike!"

"Was not Dau-ka-ye to bring a light?" asked Wanda, suddenly.

"Yes, a great and beautiful light."

“Well, this one among the Sioux has brought the light. I heard my father tell of it. It is like a circle of fire, and it is about him every time he appears.”

Here was the same thing her own father had told her. This, more than any other account of the new Messiah, perplexed A-chon-ho-ah's loving, faithful heart. This surely was a mystery she could not fathom. If the new Messiah was not really Dau-ka-ye, how came he by the light, and such a grand and brilliant light as was pictured?

A-chon-ho-ah was destined to see and hear much with reference to the new Messiah that night at the dance; for not only the men attended the dance, but also women and children. Indeed, the whole Indian community contemplated being present.

So great was the crowd that had already gathered long ere nightfall, that it was at length decided to hold the revels in a kind of glen, a half-mile or so without the camp. The Indians assembled in such throngs that it was difficult to clear a place large enough for the dance to be held; but, by dint of hard work and constant pushing and driving on the part of those who had the arrangements in hand, this was finally accomplished.

In the centre of the glen a wooden image

was set up. This was supposed to represent the Messiah. The figure was draped in buffalo robes, and bedecked with a glitter of beads, fringe, brass buttons, shells, and bits of colored glass. There were also many shining pieces of tin. One of these was so painted as to represent a great sun. This was immediately above the head of the image. The head itself was adorned with eagle feathers. Across the brow there was a strip of buckskin, handsomely embroidered with beads, and set at intervals with large brass buttons that had been burnished until they shone almost as the sun's rays. Certainly they would flash with unusual brilliance in the firelight.

Just behind this image there was erected a large furnace in the shape of a horse-shoe. This was kept aglow with red-hot coals, two of the Indians constantly replenishing the fire.

When everything was in readiness for the dance, three medicine men approached, and took their places near the image. They had no clothing, save a waist-cloth, and a blanket fastened about the neck, which fell behind like the folds of a robe. Every particle of the skin that was visible was brilliantly besmeared with paint in startling figures. Their faces were unusually forbidding. In their hands they car-

ried rattle-gourds and wands, in one end of which were stuck clumps of eagle feathers.

After burning in a pan something that flashed up like powder, and turning every now and then toward the image and prostrating themselves, the medicine men signified their willingness to have the dance begin. About three hundred Indians now approached, and began to form themselves into a circle. Like the medicine men, they were but scantily clothed. They had the waist-cloth, and a blanket or a shawl falling down their shoulders. Many of them, however, did not have the robe, and wore nothing save the waist-cloth.

The dance, but a slow movement at first, soon grew to a mad, wild revel. They threw their bodies about into all kinds of horrible contortions, howled like savage beasts, bowed and knelt and shouted to the image, and even flung themselves toward it. Some tore the eagle feathers from their heads, and, twining them about with strands plucked from the hair, threw them toward the feet of the image. All this time the medicine men were rattling the gourds and beating upon two huge tom-toms that had been carried to them.

On the outside, in groups, were gathered the women and children. Huge bonfires were blazing in every direction. Around some of

them, women were preparing a feast for the dancers.

Suddenly, in the very midst of the din, A-chon-ho-ah heard a voice close beside her say: "This is too bad!"

Turning, there was Mr. Andres.

"You do not like the dance, Mr. Andres?" A-chon-ho-ah inquired.

"No, my little friend, I do not."

"Why not, Mr. Andres?"

"Because it is bad, all bad."

"But the dance is in honor of him who says that he is the Messiah, and who is soon to come among us," returned A-chon-ho-ah, surprised that Mr. Andres should use the words that he had used.

"That makes it all the worse, my little friend. This pretended Messiah is but an earthly man, and a false one at that."

"Oh, Mr. Andres, do you really think that?"

"I know it, A-chon-ho-ah. The real Messiah has not come yet, as he promised he would. When he does, it will not be in this way, as this man who pretends to be the Messiah has come."

"How will it be, Mr. Andres?" inquired A-chon-ho-ah, her face full of the deepest interest, her eyes wide open, and earnestly regarding him.

"In the clouds, with his holy angels with him, and in a great blaze of glorious light where all can see."

"Oh, I said it! I said it!" and A-chon-ho-ah clasped her hands together, while her face fairly glowed. "Oh, Mr. Andres, I knew he would come in that way. There is a place over yonder in the mountain that is just like a throne, and the clouds come almost down to it, and it is so lovely all around it! Oh, I just know that is where Dau-ka-ye is first to appear!"

Mr. Andres smiled, and laid his hand gently upon her head. "Far better think this way than *that*," pointing to the circle of wildly swaying Indians as he spoke. "Oh, this thing worries me so! and I fear it will bring trouble!" He spoke now as though he were talking to himself, and were oblivious of those around him. "When I first heard it, I did not think it so bad as reported, but thought I'd come and see. Now I find it even worse than the report."

"You are vexed, Mr. Andres," said Wanda at this moment, coming nearer to him.

"Yes, my little friend."

"You do not like the dance?"

She had asked him the same question that A-chon-ho-ah had.

"No, my little friend, I do not."

"Then, will you not speak to the Indians and tell them so?"

"No, Wanda, I must not. It would only make them angry for me to interfere."

"But I believe they would listen to *you*, Mr. Andres."

"No, Wanda, they would not listen to any one, just now! Do you not see how excited they are?"

"And no wonder, Mr. Andres!" cried Wanda, her thoughts running away now in another channel, and her own young heart catching somewhat the spirit of the scene. "Why, don't you know it is a great man in whose honor they are dancing?"

"What kind of a great man, Wanda?"

"Oh, one who calls himself the Messiah. He is now over among the Sioux, but he is coming here. My father says he is likely to come at any time."

"What does this great man propose to do, Wanda?"

"Oh, he will make the Indians great and powerful like himself. He will give them all their lands back, and there will not be any one who can ever conquer them again."

"But what is to become of those who are not Indians, Wanda?" and now Mr. Andres bent his eyes earnestly upon the face of his little

friend. Her own eyes dropped, and she appeared for a few moments to be regarding the ground.

"I do not just know, Mr. Andres. I—I believe my father said there would none of them be left alive."

"And would my little friend care to do honor to a Messiah who would be so cruel as that?"

"No, Mr. Andres, I could not. I told my mother so, and my father heard it, and was very, very angry. He gave me five blows with the quirt for speaking the words. He hates all the white people. That is because he does not know how good some of them really are."

"But my little friend knows, and, therefore, she cannot believe in a Messiah who would be so cruel as to destroy them just because of the hatred of the Indians."

"Oh, Mr. Andres, that was what made me feel so bad about it!"

It was A-chon-ho-ah who spoke these words. She had remained silent during the conversation between Mr. Andres and Wanda, but now felt that she *must* speak.

"It was all so different from what the missionary had said to us," she continued. "The dear Dau-ka-ye of whom he told us was to be so gentle and so kind."

"So he is," returned Mr. Andres. "Oh, my little friends," he continued, earnestly, "keep your trust in this Dau-ka-ye, who is yet to come!"

"Oh, is he really, really coming, Mr. Andres? and can there be no mistake?"

A-chon-ho-ah's eyes glowed like stars as she asked the question.

"There is no mistake, little friend; he is really coming."

"And *when*, Mr. Andres?"

It was Wanda who asked the question now.

"Ah! that we do not know. It may be years or months; may be only days. For all we know he might come to-morrow."

"Oh, Mr. Andres, how glorious that would be!"

The tears of sudden joy in A-chon-ho-ah's eyes made the stars glow all the brighter as she said these words.

"Would my little friend be ready to meet him?"

Mr. Andres' voice was low and grave as he asked this question.

"Ready in what way, Mr. Andres?"

"Does she feel that she truly loves Dau-ka-ye, that she wants a heart all gentleness like his, that she does not wish evil to a single person or creature on earth, and that Dau-

ka-ye's coming would give her greater joy than anything else?"

"Oh, yes, Mr. Andres, I do believe I feel all just that way."

"Then my little friend *is* ready; but she must go on growing in these sweet graces and striving to be more and more as Dau-ka-ye would have her to be. There is a sweet time in connection with Dau-ka-ye," he continued, speaking now to the little girls, "that all Christians love to keep. It is the anniversary of the birth of Dau-ka-ye, the day of the year on which he came as a little babe to earth. It is called Christmas. It will soon be here. It is just four moons now.¹ There are to be such beautiful exercises at the mission-house. I want you two little girls to be there. If there is no other way, I will come for you myself."

"Oh, Mr. Andres, will you?" cried Wanda, almost dancing in her delight, while A-chon-ho-ah's glowing eyes showed all the joy she felt.

"Yes, that I will."

"But suppose our fathers will not let us go?" and now a cloud of sorrow came to hover above Wanda's joy.

"I think I can manage that," said Mr. Andres, with assurance. "I will get your mothers to go, too, and you can stay in the tepees with

¹ In Indian language a moon means a month.

some of your friends; or it may be," he added, "that your fathers will decide to move up to the Agency during that issue."

"Yes, maybe they will," said Wanda. "We go every now and then."

"At any rate," continued Mr. Andres, "you must be at the mission-house Christmas. There will be such a beautiful tree, with presents on it, and the missionary will tell again the story of Dau-ka-ye, of his coming to earth, of the beautiful star that told of his birth, and of the wise men who followed it till they came to where the baby was. And there will be a star to represent the real star, and ever so many beautiful things."

"Oh, that will be lovely!" cried Wanda, while A-chon-ho-ah, too, expressed her joy now in words.

"Mr. Andres," she asked, suddenly, "what day did you say it would be? What is it called?"

"It is the day that is kept in memory of the birth of Christ—of Dau-ka-ye, the Son of God. It is called Christmas, because on that day many, many years ago he was born."

"How many, Mr. Andres?"

"Nearly nineteen hundred, my little friend."

"Oh, so many as *that*? How long he has been in coming back! Mr. Andres," wistfully,

"don't you think that Dau-ka-ye will surely come soon now?"

"Maybe so, A-chon-ho-ah."

"Oh," she cried, suddenly, "it would be such a beautiful time for him to come while they were talking about him and keeping his birthday! Do you not think so, Mr. Andres?"

"Yes, a beautiful and an appropriate time, indeed."

The excitement of the dance had by this time very nearly worn itself out. Many had fallen from sheer exhaustion. Only a hundred or so remained in the circle of dancers. These had drawn close up around the image, and seemed determined to bring the revels to a close in as great a burst of adoration to that senseless figure as it was within the power of human beings to give. Some of the scenes were both horrible and disgusting.

Unable to endure the sight longer, Andres turned away heartsick. His soul was yearning over this people. How he longed to lead them in the true way; to point them to the true God, the one and only Messiah! He resolved that he would do all that he could as soon as the dancers had dispersed and broken into groups; that he would let no opportunity pass for a word in season.

A-chon-ho-ah, too, felt sad and heartsick.

Like Andres, she had been overcome by those last horrible scenes. There were strange thoughts striving to assert themselves as she turned her head so as to shut out the terrible sights. Could this be right, this mad, wild, sickening revel? Could these exhibitions really please one so gentle and so lovely as the real Dau-ka-ye had been pictured? But soon her thoughts were wandering far, far away from the scene around her. In body A-chon-ho-ah was there, amid the revels of the Indian camp, but in spirit she was with Dau-ka-ye on the mountain. Was he really coming? Were all these things she heard of him true? Did he love every one—the weak as well as the strong, the poor as well as the rich, the aged as well as the young; man, woman, child; Indian and white man alike? Oh, what a glorious Dau-ka-ye he was, to have a heart so big as that!

A-chon-ho-ah's thoughts went on and on, soaring upward, ever reaching out towards Dau-ka-ye, wondering, speculating, longing. Suppose he did decide to come on the day that they were going to hold those beautiful services in memory of him? Oh, what a grand time that would be for him to come!

CHAPTER IX.

ALAS! POOR WANDA!

THE Indians went on holding their dances, despite the warnings of the Government Agent. The exhibitions had grown to be of so revolting a nature, and the Indians had become so demoralized through the excitement connected with them, that the Government Agent realized that it was high time for him to take matters into his own hands, so far as he could.¹

The Indians were angered by the orders received, and declared that they would give trouble if they were disturbed; that they had begun the dances with the determination to keep them up until the new Messiah made his appearance, and this they intended to do. They further declared that they would fight ere they would give up the dances.

While things were in this shape, dark clouds began to gather over the home of our little friend Wanda. Up to this time, though she

¹ The scenes in the Territory attendant upon what was known as the Messianic craze are still fresh in the minds of many of my readers, I know.

had now and then received some sharp blows from her father's quirt, Wanda had been quite a happy little girl. She had played, like other Indian children, with her dolls and wooden toys and bead-work. Then, she had the cutest little cradle for her dolly, a real Indian cradle, all covered with shells, and bits of brass, and beads, and painted, yes, really painted! There was a little strap to the cradle to go over Wanda's head, and she carried her dolly hung over her back, just as her mother had carried her when she was a little, solemn-looking, blinking baby. Wanda had her own little tent, too, a real canvas tent, and she pitched it wherever she wished, and set up her housekeeping in it. They had grand times indeed, she and A-chon-ho-ah, when the latter came to visit her. Besides the dolly, and the cradle, and the wooden toys, and the tent, there was also a wonderful puppy, a sure-enough puppy, very fat and very wide-awake. Wanda would often roll the puppy in her shawl, and carry it at her back like a baby. Then, too, there was a pet coyote that was very gentle and obedient, and would sit very still, with quite a grave face, when they were taking tea in the tepee. Sometimes Wanda would place the puppy on the coyote's back for a ride, to which the coyote never made the least objection. But, best of all, there was her

darling pony. Such races as she and A-chon-ho-ah had! and so many, many rides for pleasure!

Wanda was still a child in years and a child at heart—a simple, gentle little creature. Alas! that the custom among her people should be to make women of such as she!

One afternoon Wanda and A-chon-ho-ah had been for a long ride on their ponies. The sun was setting ere they returned. A-chon-ho-ah rode by the camp of Wanda, as it was on her way home. As Wanda dismounted near her father's tepee, she bade her friend a gay good-bye. She little dreamed how soon her gaiety was to be changed to sorrow.

As she was standing by her pony, the flap of the tepee was raised, and her father came out. He seemed to be looking for her. As he caught sight of her, he said: "Go and stake your pony, Wanda, and then come here; I've something to say to you."

Watch-e-ca-da spoke with unusual gentleness, and she wondered what could be the matter. But she did not stop to ask questions. Little Indian girls knew better than to do that. Only the boys thus venture to try their fathers' patience. She went and staked the pony as bidden, and then returned to her father.

"Har-we-poy-er is within the tent and wants

you," he said, as soon as she came up to him.

"Wants me, father?"

"Yes, he has come to take you home to his tepee as his wife."

Wanda burst into tears. Too well she knew what this meant. She had again and again seen the little Indian girls taken away as wives. But, somehow, she never seemed to think this would be her fate. But now it had really come. And to think the one with whom she had to go was really this old man, Har-we-poy-er, more than six times her age, and coarse and forbidding. He was cruel, too, so Wanda had heard many times.

"Oh, father," cried Wanda, clinging to him, "you will not let me go?"

"I must, my daughter, Har-we-poy-er is rich. He has many ponies. It will be a great chance for you. Not many little girls have such."

"But, oh, father, it will break my heart. I cannot live with Har-we-poy-er. He is old, and ugly, and cruel. Oh, father, dear father, do not ask me to go away from you and my mother, and my brothers and sisters. Oh let me stay with you. I will be your very slave if only you will. I will do more than I have ever done, I will go for you and do for you as long as I can crawl. Oh, father, let me stay!"

Watch-e-ca-da was not a very hard-hearted parent, though he was often quite a stern one. The sight of his little girl clinging to him, sobbing as though her heart would break and entreating him not to send her away from him, even promising to be his slave if he would not, touched Watch-e-ca-da deeply.

What need was there, after all, to give her to this old man, at least for the present? If he really wanted her he could wait a year or two.

"Dry your tears, my daughter," he said, "and we will go into the tepee and see what can be done to send Har-we-poy-er away."

But Har-we-poy-er seemed determined not to be sent away. He first tried persuasion, then threats and scoldings. He had come for Wanda, he declared, and Wanda he meant to have.

"Do you not see that my daughter's heart is quite weak towards you?" said Watch-e-ca-da, a little sternly. "Had you not better wait?"

"Wait? No; Har-we-poy-er does not want to wait."

"But suppose that you must! Do you not see how it is? The child does not want to go, and I shall not force her, at least not now. Take my advice and go. You can come again."

Har-we-poy-er seemed to consider this as well meant. After a pause he said: "Yes, I go; but I surely come again. In two moons I return. Then you go with me to my tent," this to Wanda, with an emphatic shake of the head to accompany it.

For answer she turned away with a shudder, and buried her face on her father's arm.

The old man went away, pausing at the entrance to give one long, backward look. As he did so he took a handsome pipe from his belt, held it towards Watch-e-ca-da, and laid it upon the ground. Then he lifted the curtain of the tepee and was gone, but all felt sure they would see him again soon.

Wanda broke down again and had another cry when she attempted to picture this scene to A-chon-ho-ah.

"Oh!" said A-chon-ho-ah, her tears falling in sympathy and her arms just longing to be clasped around her playmate, "you just can't marry that ugly, cruel, old man! Why, he is twice as old as your father. Surely your father will not make you!"

"He will not now, for he has promised me he will not; but he may after awhile," said Wanda, despondently. "Oh, it is just terrible to think of! I know he will beat me nearly to death.

He has had several wives already, and one of them they say he killed."

"Yes, I have heard about it. O Wanda, surely your father will not let him have you!"

"He says he will not now. But Har-we-poy-er is very rich. He has many ponies. He will give my father choice of three of them, and my father loves ponies."

"But surely not well enough to give you away for them!"

"He may. Many fathers give their little girls away just to get somebody to take care of them."

"But that is where they do not love their little girls. Your father loves you."

"Yes, I know that he does, or he would have let me go when Har-we-poy-er came. But if Har-we-poy-er comes again, and comes with the ponies, he may let me go."

"Oh, get your mother to beg him, and you beg him too, and I will speak to my father and ask him to say something too. Your father thinks a heap of him."

"Yes, I know that he does. Oh, I do hope my father will not let me go! And yet I know that many of the little Indian girls, some who are no older than I am, have to go and be the wives of these old men. Oh, it is dreadful! The white people don't do this way. I asked

Mr. Andres once about it, and he said they didn't."

"No, they do not. How many ways they have that are different from ours! and they are ways that are so much the better, every one of them. Their women wait until they are grown before they marry, and then they need not marry unless they want to."

"I do wish it could be so with us. O A-chon-ho-ah, it is so much nicer to be little girls and play with our dolls and puppies, and to ride on our ponies, and to have the good times we do! Oh, so much better, than to be married and acting like grown women, even if our husbands were not old and ugly, and cruel!"

"That it is," said A-chon-ho-ah, with a sigh. She did not know how soon the sad fate that threatened Wanda might overtake her. Her father was kind, she knew, but then even the kindest fathers were not proof against some of the Indian customs.

Strange to say, the two little girls had not gone far after this conversation when they met old Har-we-poy-er on his pony. He scowled at them, especially at poor Wanda, and seemed on the point of reining up his pony beside hers. Then, apparently changing his mind, he rode onward.

Wanda thought of him that night and the scowl he had given her, and she could not sleep for many long hours. She lay awake watching the moonlight steal in through the opening of the tent. Then as she recalled what the old man had said about returning in two moons, she covered her head and sobbed herself to sleep.

In a few days from this time there was great sorrow indeed in the tepee. Even Wanda's previous sorrow paled beside this one. Her little brother, Watch-e-ca-da's pet and pride, was very, very sick. They had done all they knew for the little one. They had even taken him to the sweat tent, where were the rocks heated red. There they had laid him upon a bed of straw, and, pouring water upon the rocks to produce steam, had gone and left him, and shut him up tight within the house, so as to give him the benefit of the steam. Then, even while his little body was dripping with the perspiration, they had borne him to the stream and there dipped him in. Enough to have killed him instead of curing him, I am sure you will think; but the Indians believed otherwise. Despite all these things, the hot fever kept on, and the little one grew worse and worse every day. The poor mother then put all the charms she could around the bed,

or hung them up on the tepee, near the sick boy. The medicine men, too, came and made their horrid noises and went through their disgusting performances, but nothing seemed to do any good.

Over on the other side of Mt. Scott there lived a wonderful medicine man, Wich-e-tos-ka by name. He was the greatest of all the Indian doctors, for he had made cures where all others had failed. He gave medicine as well as used charms, and it was without doubt in the former that all the virtue lay.

When Watch-e-ca-da saw that nothing that had yet been done for his boy effected any good, he said: "I will go to Wich-e-tos-ka's tent and talk."

That meant he would go and beg Wich-e-tos-ka to come; for Wich-e-tos-ka was a great medicine chief indeed, and did not often leave his tent to go and see patients. They had to come to him.

So Watch-e-ca-da saddled his fleetest pony and set off at once for Wich-e-tos-ka's tent. It was right over the mountain and ten miles away, but the journey was soon made.

Going into the tent, Watch-e-ca-da seated himself upon the ground, took out the handsome pipe Har-we-poy-er had given him, lit it, drew a few whiffs, and then handed it to

Wich-e-tos-ka. All this time not a word had been spoken. And the silence continued until Wich-e-tos-ka had had his smoke. Then he said: "My friend, I can see that your heart is heavy and your eye is sad. What is it you want?"

"Chief, my little boy, the idol of my heart, is very, very sick. All that we know has been tried, and still no good has been done. He gets worse all the time. Go with me to my tent and make him laugh and play as he once did, and I will give you three ponies, three of the best I have."

Wich-e-tos-ka appeared to study this offer very carefully. Then he said: "If you will give me five ponies and the pipe," stopping to intently regard its bowl, "I will go."

"That is too much," said Watch-e-ca-da, positively. "Three ponies are enough, especially such ponies as I have to offer you."

"Wich-e-tos-ka does not move a step until you make it five ponies and the pipe," the old man said, determinedly.

"Well, then, take the ponies!" Watch-e-ca-da said, in despair. Anything to save the life of his precious boy! "But I do not know about the pipe," hesitatingly. "It was given to me by Har-we-poy-er. If I let it go it may anger him."

"The pipe must be mine," said Wich-e-tos-ka, doggedly.

"Well, then, take the pipe too!" cried poor Watch-e-ca-da, now almost beside himself with despair at the delay. "Only come."

They mounted their ponies, and were soon speeding back towards Watch-e-ca-da's tepee. As they neared it they heard a sound that struck terror to the heart of the poor father at least. It was the wail of the squaws. Was it possible that all was over? Going in, Wich-e-tos-ka threw himself at once over the body of the child. He endeavored to force medicine down its throat, but, finding this impossible, had to resort to his charms and mummary. He opened the clothing and ran his hands all over the child. Then he uttered horrid noises and burned a bit of ill-smelling stuff on a piece of tin. All this time the poor mother and the squaws who had gathered kept up the death cries. In a few moments the child was dead; and as Wich-e-tos-ka reluctantly announced this fact, the cries and screams of the women broke forth again with renewed force. The noise was terrible.

Watch-e-ca-da's grief was pathetic to witness. He bent over his child, took him in his arms, pressed him to his heart again and again, and then laid him down. He picked up the small,

thin hands and stroked them, pushed back the hair from his forehead, and laid his own cheek to that of his dead boy, and finally had to be torn from the body by those who had come to carry it to its burial. In the meantime Har-we-poy-er had entered the tepee. He carried in one hand a lot of child's toys and in the other a handsome blanket. The toys he placed either in the child's hands or near him. Then he stepped back, waiting for those who had the body in charge to cord it into a bundle. When this was done, he wrapped the handsome blanket over it, pressing the whole to his heart as though it contained the dearest treasure he possessed in the world. Not only this, but he continued to cling to it, and to weep and to howl, until those who were starting to bury it had to force him away from it. As soon as this had been done, he flung himself down upon the ground, kicking and screaming at the top of his voice. Then he sat up and beat his chest while the tears flowed down his cheeks like rain, and his sobs seemed to issue from a heart that was broken. Thus he went on long after the other mourners, even the mother and father, had utterly exhausted themselves and relapsed into silence. Har-we-poy-er certainly had a powerful pair of lungs, and he knew how to use them. Another thing that helped him was that

he was undoubtedly using them for a purpose.

When all the mourners in the tent save Har-we-poy-er had ceased their wailing, Watch-e-ca-da, as was the Indian custom, went around distributing presents. To one he gave a blanket, to another a shawl, to a third some trinkets, and so on until all had received presents according as they had mourned. Last of all, he came to Har-we-poy-er.

"My friend," he cried, "you have wept a great deal. You have mourned as none other here has mourned, save we who are bereft of our boy. Your heart is very sad for us, I can see, and your tears have been big and strong. Therefore my whole heart goes out to you, and it moves me to promise whatsoever you would ask."

Rash promise on Watch-e-ca-da's part, as he seemed to realize a moment after, but it was too late then to retract.

A cunning gleam came into Har-we-poy-er's eyes. He stopped his sobs at once and dried his tears. Rising to his feet, he crossed the tent and placed his hand upon the shoulder of Wanda, who was crouched at her mother's feet sobbing.

"Give me your daughter," said Har-we-poy-er. "It is she that I want above everything else."

"O father!" cried Wanda, starting up. Even the grief for her dead little brother was for the moment forgotten in this dreadful thing that menaced her.

"Be still, my daughter," Watch-e-ca-da said, a little sternly, though there was no sternness in the eyes that now sadly regarded her. Then he said to Har-we-poy-er, "It is not just that you should make such a claim as this. Will nothing else suit you?"

"No; nothing else will."

"I will give you one, two, three ponies."

"I do not want the ponies. I want the girl."

"Let me persuade you to change your mind."

"You cannot. Remember your promise."

"Yes, I have promised, and an Indian never goes back on his promise under such circumstances as these. My daughter," to Wanda, "you must go with the old man."

For answer Wanda clung to her mother, crying and entreating.

"Do not force her to go," Tonka said, beseechingly.

"I must," returned Watch-e-ca-da, gloomily.

"At least persuade the old man to wait a few months."

This Watch-e-ca-da strove to do, but Har-we-poy-er was inexorable. "She must go," he declared, "and go now."

With these words he tore Wanda away from her mother, placed her in front of him on his pony, and galloped away from the camp.

As she was still screaming, he placed his hand across her mouth, shook her, and declared fiercely, "If you do not shut up, I'll beat you as you have never been beaten before!"

Thus threatened, Wanda's screams ceased, but her sobs continued all the way to Har-we-poy-er's camp.¹

Poor Wanda! she led a wretched existence after that. Har-we-poy-er had other squaws, and as she was the youngest, they made a drudge of her, though they did not dare abuse her in his presence, as he seemed quite proud of her. Yet he, too, was cruel, and ordered her about much as though she had been a dog.

Night after night the little Indian girl-wife lay awake, sobbing for her mother and the pleasant home she had left. She no longer had her dolls or playthings, not even the little pet puppy. All were left behind, and she must act as a woman now. Once, utterly unable to stand it a moment longer, she ran away and went to her mother. But she had not more than pilloved her head on that loving, sympathizing

¹This method of winning a child in marriage by being the loudest and most persistent mourner at the death of one of her family is quite common among the Indians.

breast when she was snatched away again by the angry Har-we-poy-er, who gave her several sharp lashes with the quirt, and threatened to double them if ever she dared repeat the offence.

When she met her little playmate a month or so after this, A-chon-ho-ah hardly knew her. She looked so thin and pale, and oh! so sadly changed in every way. She was out on the prairie picking up sun-flower stalks for fuel when A-chon-ho-ah rode by. A-chon-ho-ah could scarcely credit her own eyes. She had to look twice ere she could really believe it was Wanda.

"Oh!" she cried, springing from her pony and catching Wanda in her arms. Her heart was too full for other words. She could only stand and gaze into Wanda's face while the tears rolled down her cheeks.

"I thought my eyes had not told me true!" she said, as soon as she could gain her speech. "O Wanda, is it really you?"

"Yes, it is Wanda," the poor little child-wife said, pathetically. She had not the heart just then to add another word.

"Oh! what have they done to you?" A-chon-ho-ah continued, turning Wanda's face so that she could have a better view of it. Its drawn, pinched appearance almost made her scream.

How dreadful it was! Could this really be Wanda, the happy, light-hearted Wanda, with whom she had played only a few months before? No, this surely could not be the Wanda who had swung her dolly to sleep in its cradle and carried her puppy in the shawl at her back. "O Wanda," she repeated, "what *have* they done to you?"

Wanda's lips quivered, and her eyes fell under the searching gaze of her old playmate. Such suffering as she had undergone could not be put into words.

"Oh! I know they have almost killed you," continued A-chon-ho-ah, "I can see it without your telling. Oh! what an old wretch that Har-we-poy-er must be! But there! I forgot that he was your—your husband."

Wanda shuddered, and drew herself together as though drawing away from some expected blow.

"Wanda," said A-chon-ho-ah, suddenly, "why do you not run away? Why do you not go back home?"

"I did once," said poor Wanda, her tears falling now at the remembrance, "but *he* followed me and brought me away, beating me besides."

"Oh! the wretch!" cried A-chon-ho-ah, clenching her fist. "But where was your father, Wanda?"

"He was not there; but if he had been, it would have been all the same, so my mother said. He would have been obliged to let me go. Har-we-poy-er owns me now."

"Owns you?" echoed A-chon-ho-ah, indignantly, "why that is the way they talk about ponies and dogs!"

All of these words went to show that A-chon-ho-ah was a very spirited little Indian maiden indeed, and, so far, had luckily escaped any very deep insight into many of the more forbidding customs of her people. In this respect fate had assuredly been kind to our young friend A-chon-ho-ah.

"Yes, I know," returned Wanda, dejectedly; "but that is the way Har-we-poy-er himself talks about it."

"Oh, it is dreadful for you to be like this! What *can* we do, Wanda?"

"Nothing," answered poor Wanda, even more dejectedly than before. "I shall have to stay with Har-we-poy-er until he himself gives me back to my father or sells me."

"Sells you?" cried A-chon-ho-ah, in horror.

"Yes; it is often done that way, though I did not know it until Har-we-poy-er himself told me. He has sold one of his wives since I have been there."

A-chon-ho-ah held up her hands before her

face, as though to shut out some dreadful thing. "O Wanda," she said, brokenly, "all this is *so* terrible to hear! How *do* you stand it? Can nothing be done? Would not Har-we-poy-er let you come back if some one went to beg him and offered him ponies?"

"No; my mother has already done that. Oh, how she did beg him! And my father, too, has been to see him. Har-we-poy-er wants me, and he is going to keep me. That is what he says every time."

"Let me help you gather the sticks," said A-chon-ho-ah, sadly. "I will put them on my pony and take them to camp for you."

"No, no," remonstrated Wanda; "you must not do that. If Har-we-poy-er saw us he might beat me. He will not let anyone do the task he gives me."

"Wanda," said A-chon-ho-ah, after a moment, and speaking slowly and earnestly, "all these terrible things you have told me make me see more and more how much better are the white people's ways than the Indians.' They never have anything like this. And the husbands are so kind, and they do not marry little girls. O Wanda, it is dreadful to be as you are!"

"Oh, it is," said poor Wanda; and now, utterly overcome, she threw herself upon the

ground and burst into a passionate fit of weeping.

A-chon-ho-ah was alarmed. She sat down beside her, took her head in her lap, and strove to the utmost of her power to soothe and comfort her.

"O Wanda!" she said, "dear Wanda, do not cry. It may all be right in a little while. Do you not remember that Dau-ka-ye is coming?" she said, joyously. "Oh, he will make it all right when he comes, I know. Both Mr. Andres and the missionary said things would be so different when he came. He has such a great, big, kind heart. He will not see anyone suffer; anyone, I mean, who tries to do as he wants them to do."

"It is so long to wait for him!" said Wanda, piteously. "Oh, do you think he will ever come?" raising her tear-stained face with a pathetic, beseeching look towards that of her old playmate.

"Yes, I feel sure that he will. Mr. Andres and the missionary say that he will, and they know. O Wanda, it may be that he will come now in a little while. Do you not remember what Mr. Andres told us about the beautiful things they were going to have on Dau-ka-ye's birthday at the mission-house?"

"Oh, yes!" said poor Wanda, breaking down

again ; “and Mr. Andres was to come for us. I can’t go now,” and she burst into another fit of passionate weeping. “Har-we-poy-er would never, never let me go. Oh, he is so cruel, and he hates the white people.”

“Poor Wanda ! poor Wanda !” said A-chon-ho-ah, soothingly, and now her own tears were falling. “O Wanda, it is too bad ! But I’ll tell you what I’ll do,” suddenly ; “I’ll not go, either. I will stay here near you. Then you can meet me somewhere, and we’ll go to the mountains together that day. O Wanda, suppose we see Dau-ka-ye first, first of all ! Oh, will not that be glorious ? Then we can tell him all about it, what a dreadful time you have, Wanda, and all that. Oh, he’ll be so kind, so kind and pitying ! Do not cry any more, Wanda. It will be all right when Dau-ka-ye comes !”

Oh ! the pure, innocent, and unbounded trust of childhood ! Would that older hearts might catch and know more of its sweetness !

CHAPTER X.

THE TIME DRAWING NEAR.

A-CHON-HO-AH saw Wanda again not long after this. She was driving some ponies to pasture, and seemed even more dejected than at their former meeting. Har-we-poy-er had beaten her twice since, and had even gone so far as to threaten to sell her if she did not do more as he wished her to do. He gave her almost impossible tasks to perform—tasks she never could have gotten through with had it not been for the pity of one of the squaws. This woman had a kind, tender heart. She could not bear to see the child suffer, and so helped her all she could.

But sometimes Har-we-poy-er seemed to get remorseful for the way he acted. Then he would be full of kindness and indulgence. He was really fond of the little girl-wife, only he had the Indian nature, and, in its meanest and cruelest degree, the nature to tyrannize over the women of his camp, especially over the smaller and weaker ones. They were all his servants, so he considered them, and made to do as he said. So he used tongue and quirt

and hand whenever he felt moved, and no Indian on the reservation lorded it more over his wives than did Har-we-poy-er. He was fitful by temper, and poor little Wanda had experienced all the extreme degrees of both cruelty and kindness. Alas! that the cruelty so far outweighed the kindness!

At this last meeting between the playmates, to which allusion has been made, they entered into plans for the watch they were to keep on Christmas day at the foot of the mountain. Wanda was to leave the camp as though she had gone to collect fuel or to give some attention to the ponies, whichever was the more plausible excuse at the time. It might happen that Har-we-poy-er would be away from the camp, so that no excuse at all would be necessary. It often happened that he was away, sometimes for days together.

Both of these young hearts were full of the coming of Dau-ka-ye. Oh! what a glad, blessed time it was to be! The most joyful in all their lives. For then everything would be made straight; sorrow and pain and trouble would flee away; burdens would be taken from bending backs, and oh! what a glad, sweet, beautiful light would come into their lives, filling all their hearts with its radiance.

To Wanda the coming of Dau-ka-ye meant

far more than to A-chon-ho-ah, though to A-chon-ho-ah it meant a great deal, a very great deal, indeed. For Wanda was bowed beneath a burden of sorrow and trouble and care; Wanda knew the sharp stings of abuse and cruelty; while, on the other hand, A-chon-ho-ah was a happy, light-hearted little girl, with kind parents and a pleasant home, though it was an Indian home.

But, as has been said, Dau-ka-ye's coming meant a great deal to A-chon-ho-ah—oh! much indeed! It was not so much for herself, however, though she longed ardently for it on her own account, as for her people. What a joy and a blessing it would be to them! Oh! there was so much that was hard and cruel in their lives. Dau-ka-ye's coming would end all this, if only they would trust him.

It would not be long now until Dau-ka-ye came, for surely he would come on that day which Mr. Andres said was to be made so beautiful for him. Yes, the time was drawing near, and oh! how A-chon-ho-ah's heart leaped as she thought of it!

But in the meantime something happened that took A-chon-ho-ah's thoughts away from Wanda, and even from Dau-ka-ye for a while, but only for a little while.

One day A-chon-ho-ah's mother sent her on

an errand that took her some seven or eight miles across the plains.

It was now October, and the air was growing chilly, especially in the early mornings and late afternoons. But the crisp, cool air made the ride all the more enjoyable to A-chon-ho-ah. She threw her blanket back from her head and let her short hair stream in the wind as she rode along.

The plains were very beautiful in their October coloring, for the grasses, the taller ones, had now their richest shades of old gold and brown. Between these were the stretches of shorter blades, creeping close to the ground, and looking fresher and greener. Indeed, there were patches in moist, sheltered places that kept their greenness nearly the year round. It was to these the ponies and other stock liked to come, and it was here that they were to be found in little herds often until late in the winter season. But the most beautiful sight was the flowers—rich, glorious clusters of wild flowers spangling the plains in every direction. Sometimes it would be only a tiny fleck of blue or crimson shining with the flash of a jewel from some clump of grass, or again many, many clusters running riotously over yards of space, and so flashing with color, often many intermingled, as to dazzle the eye, especially where the sun shone upon them.

A-chon-ho-ah rode onward with a light and happy heart. She had had many beautiful thoughts of Dau-ka-ye that day. Mr. Andres had been to see them. So, too, had the missionary. Her father had been at home this time, and A-chon-ho-ah could see that he was really pleased with the missionary, though he had treated him so coolly when he first came. But the missionary was one to make friends every time he had the chance; he was so kind and cheerful and pleasant, and seemed to know just what to say and how to say it. He talked to Ton-ke-a-bau about ponies, and pasture lands, and hunting, and the preparation of skins for the market, as though he had dealt with them all his life. Ton-ke-a-bau was greatly pleased that the missionary took such interest in these affairs. He was ready then to hear other things, and listened patiently while the missionary held services in the tepee.

A-chon-ho-ah had had such a pleasant conversation with Mr. Andres. It was all about the beautiful exercises that were to take place at the mission-house on the birthday of Dau-ka-ye. It was only about two moons off now, he told her. This brought Dau-ka-ye again very near to A-chon-ho-ah in thought. There, too, was the mountain looming up just behind her with its tall peak illumined with the October

sunlight. She turned her head every now and then to see it. There was the ledge, as imposing and suggestive as ever, and there, too, the carpet of wild flowers flashing forth their beautiful colors.

About five miles beyond her own camp A-chon-ho-ah had to pass one of the Apaches.' It seemed only a temporary abode, for the horses were picketed near the wagons instead of being hobbled and turned out to graze.

There was a stream of water near at hand, and running into it at right angles were several rain courses. These were now dry and the bottoms filled with sand. In some places they were from three to four feet deep. As A-chon-ho-ah went to cross one of these she noticed an old squaw, about twenty or twenty-five feet away, scooping a hole in the sand. Something impelled A-chon-ho-ah to stop and watch her. As she did so she saw a bundle at the old woman's feet, and then heard a feeble wail.

"Why, it is a baby she has!" said A-chon-ho-ah to herself, with a little exclamation.

The old woman heard the exclamation, and looked up quickly.

"What are you going to do?" A-chon-ho-ah asked, riding nearer.

She knew but little Apache, and so had to supplement her words with signs.

"I am going to bury the baby," said the old woman, going on with her work of scooping a hole in the sand.

"Why, it's alive!" cried A-chon-ho-ah, in horror.

"Yes, I know it is," unconcernedly.

"Oh! don't do that!" begged A-chon-ho-ah, getting down from her pony and approaching the old woman.

"But I must; it was born so," putting her two forefingers together, "and must be gotten out of the way."

A-chon-ho-ah knew that the old woman meant that the baby had been born one of twins. She had heard her mother say that there was a custom among the Indians, when twins were born, to put them out of the way, because it was believed that they brought ill luck to the family. Sometimes, when the mother's heart was very weak, and she desired to save one at least of her babies, she would put one to death, so as not to let her husband know that twins had been born. In some instances, and among some Indians, one of the babies was put to death so as to preserve good luck to the other; for as long as both lived, neither would have good luck, so it was supposed; and

even if both lived to be grown, one would die just as soon as the other.

"But you surely will not bury it alive!" protested A-chon-ho-ah.

"It makes no difference. The breath will be gone as soon as it is smothered in the sand."

"But, oh! this seems very, very cruel! Must the poor little baby really die?"

"Yes, it must, for the sake of the other. Its father is gone. It was born the day he left. He has been away five days. He will be back to-day, so the baby must die. The mother kept it longer than she ought to have done."

"And are you going to bury it in the sand? bury it while it is alive?"

"Yes," said the old woman, shortly. She was getting out of patience with A-chon-ho-ah. She did not want to be disturbed in this way. She wanted to get through as quickly as possible. Besides, what did it matter to this slip of a girl, anyhow!

"Oh! please don't! Please don't bury it in the sand! Please don't smother it in that way!"

A-chon-ho-ah was now nearly beside herself with distress, especially as she saw the old woman lift the baby and lay it in the hole that she had scooped in the sand.

"Oh! give it to me! Give it to me!" she cried, extending her hands.

"Give it to you!" echoed the old woman.

"Yes, give it to me; I will take it."

The old woman looked at her a moment as though she thought that she was surely crazy. Then she asked: "What will you do with it?"

"I will take it to my own camp and give it to my mother. I know that she will care for it; she has a good, kind heart. She would rather do this than see it killed. Oh! do give me the baby! See," a sudden impulse seeming to strike her, as her hand found its way to a little purse at her belt, "here are two silver pieces," holding up two half-dollars as she spoke, "they are all my own. I will give them to you if only you will let me have the baby."

"If I give it to you," she asked, "will you go straight home with it, and not let anyone know where you got it?"

"Oh, yes," returned A-chon-ho-ah, "I can promise that, and I will keep the promise; only I have to go to another camp on an errand for my mother; but I will be sure not to tell anyone there where I got the baby."

"Then give me the money," said the old woman, extending her hand, "and you can have the baby. It is a little girl, and is only five days old. Be very careful with it if you want to keep it, and don't ride too hard, or you may

shake the breath out of it. It hasn't much to spare now."

So saying, the old woman reached down, took the baby, who was now crying feebly, and held it towards A-chon-ho-ah.

A-chon-ho-ah dropped the silver into the old woman's hand, and signed to her to hold the baby until she mounted her pony. Then she placed the baby in the folds of her shawl at her back, as she had so often seen her mother do, and as she herself had sometimes carried her little brother and sister.

A-chon-ho-ah felt a strange thrill at her heart as she rode away with the helpless baby at her back. It had now ceased its wails, and seemed to realize that care and protection were near. A-chon-ho-ah had saved its life. She had bought it with a price, with her own money. It was now hers. What should she do with it? That question bothered her for a while. Her mother would help her, she knew. She would suggest something. She felt sure, too, that her mother would say that she had done just right in saving the life of the baby.

What a horrible thing it was that the old woman had been about to do! to bury the little baby alive! A-chon-ho-ah had heard of such things, but she had never witnessed them before. Luckily for her, her home had been, for

the most part, among those Indians who were not so cruel and degraded as the majority of their race. She had seen many things to shock her and to make her heart sad, it is true, but she had not seen the worst. Many things, too, the loving care of her father and mother had kept from her; but now she had come face to face with one of the cruelest practices of her race. She had seen a little baby, a weak, helpless creature, about to be smothered alive in the sand, and for no other reason than because it had been so unfortunate as to come into the world one of twins. In a white home one baby would have been as eagerly welcomed as the other. Indeed, much joy would have been made over the birth of both. The father would have been all smiles and happiness, and so would the mother.

A-chon-ho-ah was certainly proud of the baby. She felt a tender, peculiar feeling toward it. This was doubtless because she had saved its life. She kept turning her head so much to glance over her shoulder at the little thing nestled so trustingly at her back that she made her neck hurt with the effort.

She did not linger long at the camp where she went on the errand for her mother. Some noticed the baby, others did not. Those who did paid very little heed to it. It was a com-

mon sight to see mothers no older than A-chon-ho-ah, or at least but a little older. The one or two who knew A-chon-ho-ah well and who asked questions were told that it was a baby a woman had given her to take back to the camp with her. So they thought that A-chon-ho-ah had simply become the means of transporting a baby from one family to the other.

A-chon-ho-ah was glad to get away from the camp, and to turn her pony's head in the direction of home. She paid close heed to the old woman's injunction not to ride too fast, for fear of jolting the baby. She took care not to return by way of the Apache camp. She did not know but that the old woman might have regretted the bargain by this time and be there ready to take the baby back. The very thought made A-chon-ho-ah's heart give a leap. She did not want to give the baby up. Even in this short while it had become very dear to her. Doubtless it was the sweetness of possessorship. All her life long, so far back as she could remember, A-chon-ho-ah had been very fond of dolls. It had been her greatest delight to play with them, to lay them in her little board cradles, to swing them to her back, and to make beautiful clothes for them out of buckskin and beads and feathers. Now she had a real live baby, a baby all her own! Did ever a little girl have such a

possession before! Now what grand times she would have playing at housekeeping! Oh, how she wished Wanda could share this delight with her! But, alas! poor Wanda! she had all sorrows now instead of delights.

A-chon-ho-ah skirted a mile or more around the Apache camp. Even then she was uneasy, and kept looking back over her shoulder. Once, when she saw an old woman walking towards her across the plain, she made sure it was the old woman who had sold her the baby, and was so frightened that she urged her pony forward at a rapid pace, despite the injunction not to ride too fast. However, in a little while, and after repeatedly looking back, she became convinced that the old woman was only engaged in gathering fuel.

It would be impossible to depict Atogeer's astonishment when A-chon-ho-ah walked into the tepee with the baby at her back.

"Where did you get it, and whose is it?" asked Atogeer, quickly.

"It is mine, and I got it from an old woman who was burying it in the sand."

"Oh!" said Atogeer.

"It was born so," went on A-chon-ho-ah, holding her two fingers together.

"And so that was the reason they were going to put the poor thing to death?"

"Yes, the old woman was scooping the place in the sand. She was going to bury it *alive!*" burst forth A-chon-ho-ah.

"They often do," returned Atogeer.

"Oh, but it was awful! I couldn't bear to see the baby buried alive," she continued. "I begged the old woman for it."

"Why, what did you expect to do with it?" asked Atogeer, quickly.

"O mother," she replied, her eyes filling, "I knew you would let me bring it here. I knew you would not want me to let it be killed."

"No," said Atogeer, melting at once, "it ought not to have been killed. But what will your father say?"

"I do not think that he will care. I will not let it be any trouble. I will get it milk to drink with my own money, and I will let it sleep with me. It is my very own baby," said A-chon-ho-ah, proudly, unloosing the shawl from her back, and laying the baby in her mother's lap. "I bought it with my own money."

"Bought it?" echoed Atogeer, now more astonished than ever.

"Yes, I gave the old woman a dollar for it. She did not seem to want to let me have it at first."

"Well, I do hope that you won't repent of

your bargain," said Atogeer, now more gravely than she had yet spoken.

"O mother," said A-chon-ho-ah, quickly, "you don't think that it will bring us any bad luck?"

"No," returned Atogeer, "the bad luck will be to the child itself, or to the other one. When one dies, then the other will have to die."

"Then why wouldn't the other one have died if this one had been put to death now?" asked A-chon-ho-ah, suddenly. "I don't see any difference."

The question puzzled Atogeer. She knew not how to answer it. She shared in many of the superstitions of her race, among them this one with reference to twins; but, when confronted with reason, as in the present instance, she had not the clearness of mind to grasp it understandingly, nor to settle the point satisfactorily to herself. She only knew that it was a belief firmly held among her people, that, if twins were kept, one would die when the other did. Superstition swayed her mind, and not reason.

"It is a fine baby," she said to A-chon-ho-ah, after a few moments spent in examining it carefully. "I will do all that I can to help you keep it. Poor little creature! It would have been too bad for it to have perished."

"So I thought," said A-chon-ho-ah. "It made me feel awful to see the old woman getting ready to bury it."

Ton-ke-a-bau did not look with a favorable eye upon the baby at first. There were already mouths enough in the tepee, so he thought. But A-chon-ho-ah begged so hard to keep it, and promised so earnestly to see that it gave no trouble to anyone else, that he finally consented. So the baby really became A-chon-ho-ah's very own, and its sure-enough mother could not have cared for it more solicitously.

A-chon-ho-ah was so absorbed in her new treasure that for a time all else was forgotten, even the coming of Dau-ka-ye, save now and then as the thought of it came to her in a vague sort of way. But suddenly one day the remembrance of it flashed before her so vividly that she felt almost like crying to think that she had so long forgotten it. Indeed, tears did spring to her eyes. How could she be so absorbed with anything else as to forget about Dau-ka-ye? And now he would soon be here. The time was drawing very close. It was only about a moon off now, for surely he was coming on the beautiful day they were going to keep in memory of him.

A-chon-ho-ah's heart smote her when she recalled how long she had forgotten Dau-

ka-ye. Oh! what would he say to her when he came? Why, she ought to have thought of him all the more when she saw the old woman preparing to so cruelly destroy the little baby; for would not his coming put an end to all these terrible things?

In the meantime the excitement among the Indians with reference to the new Messiah had been steadily abating, until there was now very little of it among those on this reservation, though further west it was breaking out with increased fervor. Several of the older and wiser Indians had seen and heard things concerning the new Messiah that had led them at first to suspect, and at last seriously to doubt, his genuineness. He was only an ordinary man like themselves, they felt finally convinced. The fire by which he had surrounded himself, and which had at first been such a mystery, was now fully explained, in that he had used a substance that had produced light through friction. Some of the Indians had come upon his supply of material, and had used it for themselves. Another thing, he had been shamefully intoxicated, had fallen down right in the midst of a dance, and had had to be carried away like a log. The more sensible of the Indians who witnessed this scene were thoroughly disgusted, though many of the

lighter-headed ones still held on to the pretended Messiah with strong belief, and began to make all kinds of excuses for him. What if others could use the article that made the fire? That was no reason for supposing that he had not produced it. Why had it not been found and used before if it were so common? As to his falling down in the midst of the dance, that was through the heat of the fire that overcame him, and not through whiskey, as was asserted. So this class stuck to him, and the revels went on. But when the news was brought to the Kiowa, Apache, and Comanche Reservation, the best of the Indians said right away that he was an impostor, and that they would have nothing more to do with the dances in his honor. Luckily, they had influence with the others. This, joined to the persuasions of Andres and of the missionary, as well as the amicable, yet firm, course pursued by the Agent, had the desired effect. The revels, so far as the Apaches, Kiowas, and Comanches were concerned, were almost broken up. Only here and there, and in out-of-the-way places, and in concealment, did a small band of revellers hold on. They were principally the more hot-headed young men of their tribes.

This finding out of the impostor was a great blow to the Indians, especially to those who

had looked forward so eagerly to his coming, and who had expected to reap some great benefit thereby. Especially was Ton-ke-a-bau disappointed. He was angry, too—angry to think that he had been so badly fooled, and that he had gone to all this trouble for nothing. It had been an expense, too, for he had bought feathers, paints, and beads in abundance, and had been quite liberal in helping to provide the feasts. Now it had all been for nothing. The Messiah was an impostor, and the Indians would not come into any of the glorious possessions that he had promised. Ton-ke-a-bau was nearly beside himself with wrath and disappointment, and poured out all his feelings to Atogeer.

“O father!” said A-chon-ho-ah, “Mr. Andres said all along that he was not a real Messiah.”

“Then why didn’t he tell us?” asked Ton-ke-a-bau, crossly.

“O father! he did want to do it, but he felt that you would not believe him.”

“Well, he might have tried it,” Ton-ke-a-bau continued, crustily.

“He did speak to one or two, for I heard him myself, and I know not to how many others. That was just one time when I was at the dance.”

"What was it that you told me once about one who was the real Messiah?" asked Ton-ke-a-bau, suddenly.

"O father, that was Dau-ka-ye!"

"Well, what about Dau-ka-ye?"

"He lives up there beyond the sky. His home is called heaven, and, oh! it is so beautiful! Once he came away from it, came down here to earth. He came to save the people from their sins, and to make them good and happy. After he had stayed here on earth a while, he went back to heaven; but he is coming again, and, oh! he is going to bring such a beautiful light with him, a light that he will give to all who believe in him."

"A light!" exclaimed Ton-ke-a-bau, moodily. "The Messiah among the Sioux came with a light, but it was found out that it was no more than any other man could produce. This Dau-ka-ye will doubtless prove an impostor, too."

"Oh, no, he will not!" cried A-chon-ho-ah, almost passionately. "Dau-ka-ye is no impostor! When he comes he will really bring the light; he will do all that he has promised to do."

"Then I wish that he would make haste and come," said Ton-ke-a-bau, heartily.

"O father, so do I! and I do believe that he will. It is just one moon now till the time

when he was born on the earth, the day that is his birthday. Some think that he will come then. I asked Mr. Andres about it, and he said maybe he would. Over at the mission-house they are going to have so many things in his honor: a tree, beautiful presents, a star, lovely lights, and, oh! such a sweet talk by the missionary, all about Dau-ka-ye!"

"Oh! how I wish that I could see and hear all that!" cried poor little Narva, clasping her hands together.

"Oh! I wish you could!" returned A-chon-ho-ah, earnestly, as she knelt beside her little sister's pallet, and took the thin, wasted hands in hers.

Narva had been failing steadily all the summer and fall. She had one of those slow, but persistently wasting, fevers, the final course of which nearly always proves fatal. But Narva's family fondly hoped that, with the coming of the winter, she would get well again. Yet the cool weather had come, and still poor little Narva lay upon her pallet, day after day growing weaker and weaker, instead of mending. She was now but a shadow of her former self.

Oh, how A-chon-ho-ah's heart ached over the little sister, and how she longed to see her well and strong again and playing as she once

used to play! She was constantly devising ways to amuse her as she lay there so pale and listless, and several hours of each day were spent by A-chon-ho-ah at Narva's bedside.

Narva's heart had gone out at once to the little baby, the poor little waif rescued from its burial in the sand. From the moment she heard its story she pitied, then loved it. She begged A-chon-ho-ah to let her have half of it for hers. A-chon-ho-ah consented. So hour after hour the baby would lie in its cradle, close beside Narva's pallet, right where she could easily reach it and touch it with her thin little hand. It was pathetic to see the care and love she bestowed upon it, for she was almost as weak and helpless in one respect as was the baby. Such a quaint, devoted little mother as she made!

Narva's thoughts were divided between the baby and Dau-ka-ye, this wonderful Dau-ka-ye of whom she had so often heard her sister speak. Then, too, she remembered what the missionary's daughter had told her, and the beautiful words she had read in the little Testament.

Narva's ears were always quick when Dau-ka-ye's name was spoken, as they were on this occasion when A-chon-ho-ah was talking to Ton-ke-a-bau about him.

"If I was only well, I could go to the mission-house and see and hear these things," said Narva, wistfully. "O sister!" pathetically, "do you not think I will be well enough in one moon more?"

As she spoke she tried to raise herself from the pillow, but fell back again exhausted with the effort.

"Oh, I hope so! I hope so!" said A-chon-ho-ah, stroking the wasted hands tenderly, while her eyes filled with tears to see them so thin. "But even if you are not well enough," continued A-chon-ho-ah, "you will be when Dau-ka-ye comes. Oh, I'll ask him to make you well. That shall be the first thing I will ask him. I will say to him: 'O Dau-ka-ye! if you please, come and make my little sister well. She has been sick so long, and is so thin and weak. She does so want to be up again, and to go out and see the grass and the sweet flowers grow, and to play with her fawn, and to ride her little pony, and to be as she once was, happy and gay. Oh, please, Dau-ka-ye, come and make my little sister well!'"

"Oh, do you think he will?" cried Narva, and now she actually raised herself, so great was her excitement.

"Yes, I know he will," returned A-chon-ho-ah, confidently. "He is so loving and so

gentle, and so kind. Oh, he has such a great, warm heart. He cannot bear to see anyone suffer. When he was here on earth before, so the missionary said, he went about healing the wounds of those who were hurt, curing the sick, making the lame walk, and even giving sight to those whose eyes were gone."

"Those were wonderful things," said Ton-ke-a-bau, who had drawn near and was now listening intently. "There is one thing about this Dau-ka-ye," he continued, "that I do not like. I heard you mention it before. When he comes he is to treat the white people the same as the Indians. If he does this the Indians will want nothing to do with him."

"O father! Dau-ka-ye is gentle and loving and kind, as I have just told Narva. All are his people. He loves all. He came to die for all, so the missionary said, and now he is coming back again to save all who believe and trust him."

"Well, there are some of these whites I'd like to see him treat as they deserve. Their hearts are like the cotton-wood when it is rotten inside."

"But, father, there are good ones, too," said A-chon-ho-ah, gently, "like Mr. Andres and the missionary, and Mr. Fred, and Mr. Day, and others."

"Yes, there are some good ones," admitted Ton-ke-a-bau, "and I guess they ought not to suffer. But there is one thing certain," he said under his breath, "however this may be, the Indians want a Messiah all their own. And it's got to be a real one, too. They are not going to be fooled again."

With these words he turned and left the tepee.

"O sister!" said Narva, "if Dau-ka-ye just will cure me!"

"I feel sure he will," said A-chon-ho-ah, confidently. "In those times that he cured people they just had to ask him and to believe in him."

"Oh, I *do* believe in him?" cried Narva, her hands clasped, her eyes shining like stars through her tears—tears of joy, tears of a child's trust and fond belief.

Of one before who had a trust similar to this it had been said, "Thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

"And do you think he will bring the light, sister?" asked Narva again, wistfully, "the light of which the missionary and his daughter told us, and of which you have read in the little book?"

"Oh, yes," said A-chon-ho-ah, "I feel sure he will. That is one of the principal things he is coming to bring."

‘I have thought so much of this light,’ said Narva again. “I have wondered what it is like. At night, when all the others were asleep and I was awake, I have lain here and looked at the stars shining through the top of the tepee, and twinkling like so many beautiful eyes, and I have wondered if the light was like them. Then, when the moon would come where I could see it, I would say, ‘Oh! it must be like the moon! it is so many times more beautiful.’ But then again I would see the sun when the day came, and oh! the light would be so glorious I could hardly look at it a moment. Then I have said, ‘The light Dau-ka-ye will bring will surely be like the sun.’ O sister, what do you think it will be like?”

“It will be even more beautiful than the sun,” replied A-chon-ho-ah; “oh! many, many times more beautiful! It will shine right down into our hearts and make us so happy.”

“I could not be any happier than I am now,” said Narva, “thinking of Dau-ka-ye’s coming.”

“But, oh! when he really comes, Narva, you will be so many times happier! Why, it will make you happier just to see him! Only think, Narva, of his walking in here, right into the tepee, and saying, ‘Narva, it makes my heart sad to see you lying here so pale, and thin, and weak. Get up, my child, and walk, and run,

and play as you once used to do.' Just think of that, Narva!"

"Oh!" said Narva, her hands clasped, her bosom heaving, her eyes shining, "when he does that,"—a little sob caught her words here, and she had to begin again—"when he does that, I shall be too happy even to speak. O sister!" wistfully, "will it be long now?"

"No, Narva; not long. In one moon I believe Dau-ka-ye will come. Just think how short the time really is. Oh! it is almost here!"

CHAPTER XI.

THE DAY COMES.

THE thought of Dau-ka-ye and of the beautiful things he was to do when he came filled Narva's heart with happiness for many days. It seemed, too, that she grew brighter and better. But this change was not permanent. Indeed, it lasted only a little while. The seeming strength had doubtless come through her excitement. She began to fail again, and soon grew so weak she could hardly raise her head from the pillow. However, she did not complain; she was still the same brave, cheerful little Narva.

The winter had been unusually severe, and now, as Christmas approached, there was every indication of an early and heavy fall of snow. Indeed, it was predicted several days before it came.

The day before Christmas, and as soon as she had eaten her breakfast, A-chon-ho-ah mounted her pony and rode towards Wanda's camp. Her heart was beating tumultuously. To think that to-morrow was the day that Dau-ka-ye was

expected! Yes, to-morrow she and Wanda began their watch of the mountain.

She had not seen Wanda for several days—for nearly two weeks, in fact. She therefore did not know what had happened to her former playmate during all this time. How fared it with poor Wanda? That was the question constantly presenting itself as she rode towards the camp. Would the way be clear? and would her little friend be able to keep that watch with her on the morrow?

The last time she had seen Wanda they had agreed that on this day, at a certain hour, and at a place not far from Wanda's camp, they would meet. It was towards this spot that A-chon-ho-ah was now riding.

She reached the place, but there was no sign of Wanda. She waited several minutes, then growing impatient, and cold too, mounted her pony again and rode toward an old woman she saw picketing some cows near to a clump of cotton-woods. From her A-chon-ho-ah learned that Wanda was at the camp; so too was Har-we-poy-er. This was doubtless the reason Wanda had not yet appeared at the meeting-place. By paying the woman a little bribe, A-chon-ho-ah finally got her to consent to carry a message to Wanda in such a way that no one else would hear it.

While waiting, A-chon-ho-ah rode her pony about, so that the exercise might keep her warm.

In about half an hour Wanda came. She was pale and breathless, and told A-chon-ho-ah that she had had a time in getting away from Har-we-poy-er.

"And now I must hurry," she concluded, "or he may find out I have come away without asking, and perhaps beat me when I return."

"Poor Wanda," said A-chon-ho-ah, her heart full of sympathy. "Does Har-we-poy-er treat you as cruelly as ever?"

"Yes, he does; even more so sometimes."

"Oh, that is dreadful!"

"Yes, it is dreadful; but what can I do?"

Instead of replying, A-chon-ho-ah met Wanda with another question. But, unlike Wanda's, it was a happy, joyous question. Indeed, it was so happy, so joyous, it fairly broke from her lips.

"O Wanda! do you know what day tomorrow is?"

Wanda's sad, heavy eyes brightened.

"Yes," she said, "I do. I was thinking of it just before your message came."

"And can you go with me to watch the mountain?"

"I do not know. Oh, I am afraid I cannot! Har-we-poy-er is not likely to go away. I

know he will not if the weather gets much colder."

"Oh, that is too bad! Cannot you make some excuse to leave, Wanda?"

"I do not know. I will try. But," she continued after a moment's pause, "if the weather is very cold, ought we to go? Do you think we could stand it? I heard some of them say at the camp that it was going to snow."

"Oh, as it will be Dau-ka-ye for whom we are watching, we'll not mind it!" A-chon-ho-ah returned, her eyes flaming. "But we can keep from being too cold. We can make us a fire under the cotton-woods, and I'll take a piece of cloth of which our old tepee was made, and we'll put it up on some forks. O Wanda! I feel sure we can keep real comfortable. And to think what we may see ere the day is over!"

"Oh, will it not be grand?" cried Wanda, catching some of A-chon-ho-ah's excitement now.

"Yes, that it will! Don't fail to come, Wanda. I'll wait for you under the cotton-woods. You remember, I showed you the place? I will have the fire and the cloth for our tent there, and all ready."

"O A-chon-ho-ah!" said Wanda, suddenly, "was it not too bad that we could not go to

the mission-house and see what is to be there to-morrow?"

"No," said A-chon-ho-ah, "not so bad. Why, Wanda, it will be a heap better, oh! so much better, to stay here and watch the mountain. Just to think, we may be the very first ones to see Dau-ka-ye! Oh, will that not be grander, many times, than going to the mission-house?"

"Yes, if only we see him."

"I feel sure that we will."

A-chon-ho-ah could scarcely sleep that night for thinking of the morrow. She was up ere daylight came. When it did come, her heart felt a thrill of disappointment to see that clouds thick and threatening had gathered. Dau-ka-ye ought to have a brighter day than this one promised to be.

She went early to the clump of cotton-woods, the cotton-woods only a little distance from the foot of the mountain, and from which such a clear view was to be had of the point at which A-chon-ho-ah felt sure Dau-ka-ye would appear. The flowers were gone now, but the ledge looked as imposing and throne-like as ever, despite that winter had robbed it of the beauty of its surroundings. But above it the clouds hovered, almost touching it, it seemed to A-chon-ho-ah; and though they were murky and threatening, there was nevertheless about

them a mystery and a sublimity that filled A-chon-ho-ah's heart with awe and reverence; for was it not down through them that Dau-ka-ye was to come? Oh, how bright and beautiful they would be then!

A-chon-ho-ah built the fire, set up the forks, spread the canvas over them, and then sat down to wait for Wanda.

The clouds had lifted somewhat, and now the imposing summit of the mountain was in full view. The sun, too, was making an effort to shine, and the light struggling here and there through the clouds gave them glistening edges of gold that were indescribably beautiful.

"Oh," cried A-chon-ho-ah, her eyes radiant, her heart fluttering like a bird, "I believe he is coming! I believe he is coming!"

But, though she watched for many moments with straining eyes, there was yet no sign of Dau-ka-ye.

Wanda came at last. She had had a hard time getting away from the camp. Har-we-poy-er was there, and was likely to be all day. Therefore she dared not remain away for any great while.

"Oh, we'll not have to stay long!" A-chon-ho-ah cried, excitedly. "Dau-ka-ye will soon be here. I feel sure that he will! Do you not see how the light is shining through the clouds?"

O Wanda! suppose that we should see him this very moment coming right down there through that spot that is so beautiful, what would we do? Oh! I feel sure I could scarcely draw my breath."

Wanda was almost as much excited as was A-chon-ho-ah. Her heart beat rapidly; her breath came and went in little short, quick gasps; her hands were clasped; her eyes were fixed upon the mountain and the clouds in a gaze that, it seemed, must pierce not only through, but beyond them.

A-chon-ho-ah stood at her side. Her own heart was beating as though it would quite beat itself out of her bosom. One arm was across Wanda's shoulders, the other extended, the hand shading her eyes as though the better to aid their vision in the effort they were making to penetrate beyond the clouds; for was not Dau-ka-ye there, and perhaps all the beautiful angels with him? Oh! if she could but get a sight of them!

The fire had gone out; the wind had taken the canvas, so hastily and rudely improvised into a tent, and had carried it several feet beyond the clump of trees; the skies all behind them had grown gloomy and forbidding; the gusts whistled through the trees, and tossed their clothing, but still the two little girls stood

unmindful, unheeding, their eyes fixed upon the clouds above the mountain, through which they felt sure that Dau-ka-ye was to come.

But the cold soon made itself felt, and the wind sent keen stings to their bones. Finally, as the light went out from the clouds, and the shadows settled all around them, they turned away with a shiver from the inspection of the mountain, and for the first time became aware that fire and tent had both left them.

"Oh! our fire is out!" cried Wanda, "and where is the cloth of which you made our little tent?" Then, as she spied it fluttering in the wind at some little distance away, she ran to bring it. They set up the cloth again on the forks, and pinned it to the ground. Then they raked together the embers of the dying fire and threw fresh fuel upon them. This done, they turned once more for a watch of the mountain.

Alas! there was no longer any light visible through the clouds! All had grown gloomy, chill, and gray. The very mountain itself seemed to catch the shadows, and to be wrapped all about with them. The summit was now quite hidden, and almost the precious ledge of rock.

"Oh!" said Wanda, despondently, "I do not believe that Dau-ka-ye is coming!"

A-chon-ho-ah's own heart felt the echo of

these words. She, too, was beginning to lose hope. Nevertheless, she replied bravely: "Do not let us give up yet. The day is but half over. Oh! somehow I can't let the thought go that Dau-ka-ye will yet come."

"But I must go back to the camp now," said Wanda. "I have already stayed longer than I ought. Oh! I am so afraid that Har-we-poy-er will beat me!"

"I hope not," said A-chon-ho-ah, with deep concern. "Beg him not to. Tell him I kept you. O Wanda!" anxiously, "are you not coming back again, coming back here to watch with me?"

"I am afraid that I cannot," said Wanda, sadly. "Har-we-poy-er will not let me leave again to-day."

"O Wanda, it is too bad that I must watch alone!"

"It is; but it cannot be helped."

"O Wanda, suppose that Dau-ka-ye *should* come! You will not be here to see!"

"But you will come at once to tell me," said Wanda, quickly. "O A-chon-ho-ah! promise me that you will, the very moment that you see him, get your pony and make it run every step of the way."

A-chon-ho-ah hesitated a moment. This was a great promise to make. It was three miles and more to Wanda's camp, and, oh! she

did so want to see Dau-ka-ye herself the very moment he came. She wanted to speak to him about Narva. But, then, poor Wanda's need of him would be pressing, too. Yes, she would ride to Wanda's camp at once with the news, so she assured her former playmate, and sent her away feeling very hopeful and happy.

A-chon-ho-ah kept the watch for an hour or more after Wanda left her. Then she noticed an old squaw moving about on the prairie in quite a rapid and excited manner. She seemed to be hunting for some one, or for the track of some one. At length, as she caught sight of the smoke of the fire and of the extended piece of cloth, she came on a run towards A-chon-ho-ah.

"Your mother has sent for you," she said, as soon as she could get her breath. "She thought you might be out here by the mountain somewhere. Haste to the tepee as fast as you can. Your little sister is dying!"

A-chon-ho-ah needed no second bidding. Fire, tent, and even Dau-ka-ye, were all forgotten in this overwhelming sorrow that threatened her. She ran every step of the mile between her watching-place and the camp.

She heard her mother's agonizing wails some little time ere she reached the tepee. She felt like adding her own to them, but realized that

she must save all her breath for the effort of running.

It was only too true, the news the old squaw had brought. There lay poor little Narva upon the pallet, her eyes closed, her hands clenched, her breath coming and going in faint gasps.

Ton-ke-a-bau was not there. Indeed, almost every man and boy in the camp had left a few hours before to go on an all-day hunt.

"Oh, if only Wich-e-tos-ka, the great medicine man, could be brought!" wailed poor Ato-geer. "But, alas! there is no one here to go for him."

"I will go," said A-chon-ho-ah, with quick decision, and ere her mother could enter her protest, even had she been calm enough to think of so doing, she had left the tepee and was hastening for a pony. She quickly saddled one, mounted, and was away like the wind.

As yet she had not had the time to mourn for her sister. The interval between her entrance of the tepee and her departure had been so brief that she had barely fallen upon her knees beside her sister ere she had risen again to hasten on this ride for the doctor. Now as she thought of poor Narva lying there in that terrible state, in what might prove the death agony unless she could get the doctor in time, her tears began to fall like rain and her sobs almost choked her.

Wich-e-tos-ka, as has been said, lived directly across Mt. Scott. There was a longer way around, but as this was twice as far as across the mountain, no one ever thought of taking it, especially in a case of emergency.

A-chon-ho-ah had not left her camp a mile behind when she became aware that snow was beginning to fall. She gave a little shiver and drew her blanket closer. The flakes came faster and faster. Soon all the prairie around was in obscurity. But, nothing daunted, A-chon-ho-ah urged her pony and kept steadily on; Narva's life was too precious for her to turn back, even for a heavy snow-fall. Wich-e-tos-ka must be summoned, if in her power.

She had now reached the foot of the mountain and began the ascent.

A-chon-ho-ah knew well the trail that led to Wich-e-tos-ka's. She had twice been over it—once with her father and once alone. If the snow did not fall too fast and cover up the way, she would have no trouble in finding it.

But the snow was now coming down in large and rapid flakes. There was already a covering half an inch thick upon the ground. The brown, bare grasses and the shrubs were covered, too, with a coating. A-chon-ho-ah had not yet entered the denser shrubbery. This was further up on the mountain.

Higher and higher went A-chon-ho-ah. She was now at least half-way up, and so far she had been able to detect the path. But now the skies grew darker, the snow came faster and heavier. Soon her pony began to stumble. Once he almost threw A-chon-ho-ah from his back. There were many roots and ruts in the path she knew. There were sharp turns, too, along the edges of ravines, that in the spring and fall served as the channels for the several water-courses that made their way down from the mountain. If her pony stumbled near one of these, it would be almost certain death to her.

But A-chon-ho-ah was a brave little girl. She did not give this matter a second thought, but urged her pony on. It was not the pony she wanted to ride; not the one she had been accustomed to using. It was in some respects a strange pony, one that Ton-ke-a-bau had not long owned. When A-chon-ho-ah had gone to saddle a pony to ride to Wich-e-tos-ka's, her own was not to be found. Her father or one of her brothers had doubtless ridden it. But this pony was gentle, she knew, and obedient, though he was not so sure-footed as her own. The great difficulty was that he and A-chon-ho-ah were not well acquainted with each other. This made things a little harder for both than they would otherwise have been.

The path grew steeper and more rugged. They were now nearly to the top. The snow was still coming down heavily, though the branches of the trees warded it off somewhat. It was growing colder all the time. The sky, too, had become darker. It was almost like twilight, so thick was the fall of snow.

It was now well past the middle of the afternoon, and A-chon-ho-ah began to feel uneasy. They were not making the progress she had hoped. She urged her pony to a faster gait, and then something happened. The pony stumbled. A-chon-ho-ah was not on the lookout for it, and was sent flying over his shoulders, her head striking in among the roots of a tree. Although the pony was not going fast, the force with which A-chon-ho-ah's head struck the roots not only stunned her, but caused her to lose consciousness.

How long she lay there in that state she did not know. It was doubtless a half-hour or more. When she came to herself she was alone. Her pony, growing tired of waiting for her to regain the saddle, had turned away and left her. As the path homeward was the one he knew best, he had undoubtedly taken that. In vain A-chon-ho-ah ran back for some little distance along the way they had come, calling loudly for the pony. He was far beyond the sound of her voice.

A-chon-ho-ah's first impulse was to make her way back to her camp. She might, perhaps, overtake the pony on the road. But then came the thought of Narva, which spurred her forward. She must bring the doctor, for it was the only chance for the life of her little sister. Wich-e-tos-ka was a great medicine man. If only she could get him there! She resolved to make the rest of the journey on foot. Another thing that helped her to this resolve was that she was now almost as near his camp as her own. Once she reached the summit, it would not be so hard going down as it was climbing up. Wich-e-tos-ka would surely lend her a pony to ride back. She was so glad she had on good, stout moccasins and leggings, and that her blanket was new and warm. Drawing it closer around her, she set off with a brave heart through the snow-drifts.

After much toiling and sharp climbing she finally reached the summit. She was not quite sure now that she had the right path, for the snow had come so fast that the trail was quite obscured. Still, she thought she could tell by the trees. She had an idea, too, as to the direction. The sky was now quite dark and gloomy; the snow came faster and faster; the pitiless cold cut her with sharp stings.

On the summit she paused a moment, irreso-

lute. Which way should she go? There was now no sign of the trail to guide her. Where she had hoped to have help from the trees, she was only confused. The snow was so blinding she could see but a few paces ahead.

But no thought of turning back entered A-chon-ho-ah's loyal heart. She would reach Wich-e-tos-ka's camp and summon him to her little sister at any cost to herself, even to the giving of life itself, if need be. So, after that one moment of irresolution as she paused upon the summit, she turned and started down the mountain side. She had not gone far when she experienced a feeling of dismay. She was sure now she was not in the trail. She could tell this by the numberless hollows into which she plunged and the uneven places over which she had to climb. Again and again, too, she became entangled in the underbrush. Still the brave purpose to keep on held heart and feet steadfast.

On toiled A-chon-ho-ah, further and further down the mountain side. A thick gloom was now settling about her. She could see but a few paces in front of her. The night was assuredly drawing on, and still no sign of Wich-e-tos-ka's camp. Added to this terror that now threatened her—the terror of the night catching her on the mountain—she had

now literally to do battle with the snow as she toiled onward. For the fall had grown almost to a storm, and she had to fight her way through it at every step.

Was she going in the right direction? The thought that she might not be almost made her heart stand still. Surely she would come in sight of the camp directly. Surely she would hear some sound to guide her. Wich-e-tos-ka lived almost at the foot of the mountain, and she now felt sure that she was near the bottom. But as she toiled on and on, and as still there was no sign of life to cheer her, no hope of human aid, her heart sank and sobs began to escape her. Even her superb courage could not hold out against such odds as these. But, though she was shaken by the danger that threatened her, still her loyal heart never once regretted that she had undertaken the journey. No, no, no! a hundred times no! Oh, if she could yet reach Wich-e-tos-ka's camp and send him to Narva! That one burning desire was uppermost in her heart.

The terror that had threatened her now became a reality. Night had indeed settled down, and A-chon-ho-ah could no longer keep away the dreadful truth. She was lost on the mountain! Oh! how dark it was! If only she could see the light of a star twinkling through the trees!

The thought of the star brought again, and suddenly, the thought of Dau-ka-ye. Oh! how had she forgotten him? It was all because she was so distressed about Narva. But now, when the darkness had come, and she was alone on the mountain, and longed for the light even of a star, then she thought of Dau-ka-ye. Oh! if she could but meet him now! Where was he? Why did he linger? Perhaps he would come even yet. Perhaps it had been his intention all along to come at night, for then the beautiful light he was going to bring would seem all the brighter and more beautiful.

On went A-chon-ho-ah down the mountain side, groping her way in the dark, plunging through the snow-drifts, getting up again to toil onward, and with her limbs now growing so cold and stiff that she could scarcely drag them after her. She felt sure that she would have to stop after a while if she did not come to Wich-e-tos-ka's; that she would have to give up through the actual want of strength to proceed. Then what would become of her?

Oh! where was Dau-ka-ye? Why was he lingering? He was surely there upon the mountain somewhere. Maybe, if she called him, he would hear her and would come. She stood still a moment, and her heart stood still

also at the very thought. Oh! did she dare do it? But, then, the light! the light! Oh! how dark it was! Where was Dau-ka-ye and the light? Would he never come? Oh! how dark it was! how very, very dark! Poor A-chon-ho-ah began to sob bitterly, not only because of the cold and weariness, but also because of the terror that possessed her.

Her limbs were now so stiff and numb that she could scarcely drag them after her. Had she not been walking on a level, as she now was, she assuredly would have fallen, and have been unable to proceed. As it was, she was not walking, only staggering, and seeming on the point of falling at every step.

She seemed now to be in an open space as well as a level one. As she no longer had the protection of the trees, the snow beat about her most furiously.

Added to the weariness and numbness, a feeling of sleepiness began to steal over her. Slower and slower grew the steps; more and more her body swayed from side to side! Oh! what was that she heard? Was not some one calling her? What meant that ringing of bells in her ears? What *was* that beautiful music? Was Dau-ka-ye really coming? Oh! if she could just keep awake long enough to see him! Yes, she would try, she would try, she would

try! Oh! he must not pass her by! He must see her! She would call him!

“Dau-ka! Dau-ka!” But the poor, pale, blue lips refused to give forth another sound; the tongue had grown paralyzed ere the last syllable of the precious name could be uttered. Then A-chon-ho-ah staggered, fell, and lay a motionless heap upon the snow.

And now the snow, as though ashamed to deal rudely, roughly, with one so loyal, so brave, so trusting, as this child had been, began to fall more gently, though it still came down in steady flakes. Soon there was only a white mound to tell where A-chon-ho-ah had fallen, and, oh! how cold and pitiless it looked! Could it be that God, the angels, and that dear, precious Dau-ka-ye in whom this child-heart so faithfully believed—could it be that all these had forgotten her? Could it be that she would be left to lie there in the cold and the darkness, to go out, perhaps, into the gloomy “valley of shadows,” and never, never to find the light? Ah! Dau-ka-ye, blessed, tender, pitying Dau-ka-ye, didst thou ever yet so desert the soul that trusted in thee?

CHAPTER XII.

AT LAST THE LIGHT.

THE Christmas exercises at the mission-station had been beautiful and instructive. But there was one thing that took away much of the pleasure of the occasion from nearly all present: the missionary could not be with them, or, at least, he had to leave before the exercises were but little more than begun.

Stumbling Bear had sent for him. His son was dying, and the old chief's pleading to have the missionary come was pitiful indeed. If only the missionary could get there in time to talk to the boy ere he went out on that last long journey! How happy this would make Stumbling Bear's heart!

The missionary could not refuse, though at first it seemed almost out of the question for him to go. How could he leave these services, when he had made such earnest and careful preparation, and so much depended upon them? How could they be carried out without him? Would not the principal object he had in view fail of its point if he were not there to

give the services the impressiveness he desired? How he longed to reach these Indians, to bring home to them as never before the story of the birth of Jesus the Saviour, and of God's gift of his Son! He could make it so forceful, so impressive, on this occasion.

But then, there was Stumbling Bear and his pitiful, pleading message. The missionary loved and honored the old chief. He had been one of the first to come forward and welcome him on his arrival at the station. Owing to the chief's position and influence, this show of friendship had greatly aided the missionary in gaining a foothold among the Indians, especially among the Kiowas. Now Stumbling Bear was in trouble, yea, in the deepest kind of trouble, and had sent for him. He could not refuse. Besides, there was the thought of the dying young man to reach and stir his heart. His going might mean the turning of an immortal soul from darkness unto light. So he stopped the exercises long enough to tell the Indians of the call he had, to dissuade them from leaving when some of them showed the disposition to do so, and to assure them that everything would be carried out as he had planned. Then, leaving matters in the hands of his wife and Andres, he went to prepare for his journey.

It was now about ten o'clock in the morning.

The skies were dark and heavy with clouds, and the wind had begun to blow keenly.

"It looks like snow," said the missionary as he was hitching up the ponies, "and I guess I had better prepare for it." So he drew on his fur overcoat and great fur cap, fastening the latter snugly under his chin. Then he put his thick, warm leggings on over his boots. In addition, he placed his rubber coat and boots, and two heavy blankets in his cart. When all was in readiness, he gave the word to his ponies and started off.

It was a long journey to Stumbling Bear's—thirty miles or more—and it would take him, he knew, until late that afternoon, even with good travelling, to make it.

Stumbling Bear lived near the foot of Mt. Scott, though directly across it from the mission-station. In order to reach it Mr. Melville did not have to go over any portion of the mountain, but only partly around it. Thus he could drive all the way with his ponies and cart, as there was a very good road.

He had gone but little more than half his journey when it began to snow. It was just at this moment that A-chon-ho-ah, riding from her camp to summon Wich-e-tos-ka, felt also the flakes drifting across her face.

But the missionary expected the snow, and

had prepared for it, so he only urged his ponies to a little faster gait, and went back again to his musings.

When A-chon-ho-ah was climbing the mountain, buffeted by the heavy flakes that came down with the swiftness of a storm, he was driving around the mountain, the nimble feet of his hardy ponies making good time over the almost level road. When her pony stumbled and fell, and left her an unconscious heap in the snow, the missionary lacked only a few miles of being to the end of his journey.

Stumbling Bear came a part of the distance on his pony to meet him. He had been so sure he would answer the call. He had joyous news for the missionary. His son had rallied wonderfully. They had felt sure that he was going to die. Indeed, it seemed they could almost hear the death-rattle in his throat. The old chief had completely given way to grief and despair. It appeared next to an impossibility to get the missionary there in time. At that thought Stumbling Bear's heart almost broke. How could he let this son, this precious boy, go out into the darkness unless the missionary was there to guide him, to point the way, to fill his heart with trust?

And now to think he was not only alive, but he was conscious! He knew what was said to

him. He had even spoken some words to his father and mother. Oh, it was wonderful!

Mr. Melville found the young man, as his father had said, not only conscious, but able to talk. He was, indeed, rejoiced at this.

Stumbling Bear's son had been bitten by a spider, a most venomous one. The poison had taken full possession of his system, and his death had been expected for some time. All the doctors had failed to do him any good; even the Government physician had pronounced his case incurable.

Mr. Melville lingered for several hours talking and praying with the young man. His heart was, indeed, made glad at the readiness with which he listened and the earnestness he displayed in reaching out for the light.

He seemed so much better that Mr. Melville hoped he would linger for several days yet. Finally, as the storm ceased and the moon came out clear and bright, Mr. Melville resolved to return to the mission-station that night, although it was still very cold. There were so many things for which he was needed. Indeed, it had been at a great sacrifice to his work that he had made this journey to Stumbling Bear's. Now that he had accomplished the purpose for which he had been summoned, he felt that he ought, by all means, to be at his home early on the morrow.

Stumbling Bear tried to dissuade him from taking the ride back at night, but when matters were explained to him by the missionary he saw fully how urgent they were. Then he no longer dissuaded, but set about getting the missionary ready for the journey. He insisted that he take fresh ponies. He had two as fine ones as could be found anywhere in the Territory. The missionary's could be returned to him later. Then he had the wheels removed from Mr. Melville's cart, and runners put on instead. He also placed a heavy buffalo robe inside in addition to the blankets. Finally, he persuaded the missionary to take along with him an Indian lad of fifteen or sixteen, whom Stumbling Bear said knew every foot of the ground back to the Agency. Despite the heavy fall of snow, Psait-ca would keep the road.

It lacked only an hour or so of midnight when the missionary started. The fall of snow had entirely ceased, and the clear light of the moon shone over a broad expanse of prairie. Many objects were as distinctly seen as though it had been day. But, as they neared the mountain, things grew more shadowy, for a fringe of tree tops now partly obscured the moon.

For about four miles the road lay directly

around the base of the mountain. There was now no sign of the track, for everything far and near was covered with a thick mantle of snow. But Psait-ca seemed to know the way well, and showed no hesitation in driving steadily onward.

Suddenly, just as they had entered one of the most obscure portions of the road, one where the trees arched overhead and threw deep shadows, the ponies shied and made so short a stop that it almost threw the occupants from the cart.

"Why, what can be the matter with them?" asked Mr. Melville, looking at Psait-ca.

"There is something in the road, I think," he replied.

Both looked ahead intently. All they could see was a small, mound-like drift of snow in the centre of the road.

"Why, that isn't anything to scare them," said Mr. Melville. "It is, doubtless, only a small log or pile of branches drifted over. They must have caught sight of something among the trees."

But, though they now strained their eyes in every direction, they could see nothing calculated to frighten the ponies.

Again they were urged forward, and again they stopped, this time almost beside the mound. And now they showed unmistakable

signs of excitement, for they were trembling perceptibly.

"There is something about the mound they do not like," said Psait-ca. "I will get down and see what it is."

But ere he could put his words into action a small yellow dog, his pet, that had persisted in leaping into the cart and crouching at his feet just as they were driving away from the camp, now sprang downward, ran along the ground, and began pawing vigorously at the mound, at the same time barking loudly.

"There is surely something there," said Mr. Melville at this juncture, and if it had not been that he had been left to hold the ponies, he, too, would have gotten down.

Psait-ca was soon beside his little dog and bending over the mound. So industrious had that small animal been in his pawing operations that he now had a considerable hole in the mound. The light under the trees was so obscure that it prevented Psait-ca from seeing at once what he a few moments later discovered. There was clothing showing through the hole the little dog had excavated. When at last Psait-ca made this discovery, it did not take him long to completely bring to view the object the mound of snow had been covering.

"It's a young squaw," he called out excitedly

to the missionary, "and I do believe she is dead. Of course she's dead," he added, more to himself than to Mr. Melville, "for how could she lie here under all this snow without being so?"

"Brush every bit of the snow from her clothing and bring her here," the missionary said, quickly. "Now lift her in the cart and lay her down on the blankets right under the buffalo robe. Why, she's nothing but a child!" he exclaimed, pityingly, as he caught a glimpse of the face and figure as Psait-ca lifted her into the cart, placing her as the missionary had directed.

"Now, while you drive," Mr. Melville continued, "I will chafe her hands and face, and do all I can to bring her back to consciousness. Poor young thing! I'm afraid she *is* dead. But drive as fast as you can without taxing the ponies too much. We ought to get her to a doctor as soon as we can, for there may be life."

So, while Psait-ca urged the ponies, the good missionary began to rub poor A-chon-ho-ah's benumbed flesh as vigorously as he could, for it was she they had found under the snow-drift.

The little dog, too, seemed desirous of doing all he could to arouse her. He crouched beside

her on the blankets, licking her face, and now and then her hands, with his soft, warm tongue.

"Oh, poor child!" said the missionary, with a rush of tears to his eyes, "I'm afraid she is dead. What a terrible time she must have had wandering in the snow! for everything points to her having been lost in the storm."

"I am puzzled to know," he continued, "from whence she could have come. I do not recollect to have seen any camps hereabouts on my journey over. Can you recall any, Psait-ca?"

"No," replied the lad, "I do not remember any on this side, unless it is of Indians traveling about."

They had now come from out the shadows of the trees and were driving over the open prairies. Again the moon shone with a clear light all around them.

"I think I feel a little stir of life," Mr. Melville said, after carefully holding A-chon-ho-ah's hand in his own for some moments. Then he bent for a closer view of her face. As he did so, an exclamation escaped him.

"Why," said he, "I do believe this is a little girl I know very well, A-chon-ho-ah by name! If it is, then she is many miles from home. She is Ton-ke-a-bau's little daughter, and lives on the other side of Mt. Scott."

"Why, that is twelve miles or more from

here!" said Psait-ca, quickly. "I know very well where Ton-ke-a-bau lives."

"I feel sure that this is A-chon-ho-ah," Mr. Melville said again, after another close scrutiny. "Poor little thing! How came she to be lost in the snow?"

He again fell to chafing her hands, face, and limbs, and soon had his reward in feeling a gradual warmth stealing over her body. Mr. Melville held the poor frozen form as close to his knees as he could. He also bade Psait-ca draw as near as he could on the other side. In this way they might communicate some heat from their own bodies. The faithful little dog had already taken up his place across her feet, and Mr. Melville felt glad of this.

"We will not stop now, even if we do come to an Indian camp," Mr. Melville said to Psait-ca. "All will be asleep if we do, and it will take a long while to awaken them and to make them understand what we want. Then, there will be no doctor there, at least no such doctor as this poor frozen child needs. So the best thing is to push on to the station. There she can have the best of attention."

Psait-ca needed no second bidding. He knew that the ponies he drove were hardy as well as swift. So he urged them onward, until their pretty, graceful feet seemed fairly flying over the snow.

The dawn had begun to break in the east, and all the prairies around had caught the promise of the coming day, as they drove up to the gate of the mission-house. No one was astir, as it was too early yet. Telling Psait-ca where to put up the ponies, Mr. Melville raised A-chon-ho-ah in his arms and bore her to the house. She was still unconscious, and her limbs were stiff, but it seemed to Mr. Melville that he could hear her faintly breathing. He realized that haste was needed, so he rapped loudly at the door. John came to open it—John, sleepy-eyed, but alert in a moment, as soon as he noticed the burden in his father's arms.

“O father, what have you there?” he asked, quickly.

“A little Indian girl who has been frozen in the snow. Hasten, John, get your clothes on, and go with all speed possible for Dr. Holley. Tell him the urgency of the case, and beg him to come at once.”

Then he bore the unconscious A-chon-ho-ah into his little study, and placed her upon the lounge. Quilts and blankets were piled upon her. In order to get these he had aroused his wife and Emma, and they were now doing everything in their power to help him revive A-chon-ho-ah. Her clothing was removed, and

she was placed between blankets. Then, while Mr. Melville made the fire in a little stove near at hand, both Mrs. Melville and Emma rubbed A-chon-ho-ah all they could without exposing her body to the chill of the air.

Emma had recognized A-chon-ho-ah at once, and her heart had been deeply grieved to note her condition and to hear from her father how she had been lost in the snow.

Dr. Holley shook his head gravely when he came. The child was in a serious condition, he said. She had evidently not been taken from the snow a moment too soon. "But if there is a spark of life left," he declared, "we'll find it," and with these words he set to work with all vigor to restore A-chon-ho-ah.

Dr. Holley had been Government physician for several years. So great was his popularity, and so conscientiously did he do his work, that he had served under two administrations, and was a favorite with whites and Indians alike. His popularity, too, was based upon no undeserving foundation, for he was a thoroughly skilled physician.

He worked long and patiently over A-chon-ho-ah, Mr. and Mrs. Melville and Emma assisting him. At last he was rewarded by feeling her heart begin to beat regularly, though faintly. But he shook his head doubt-

fully as he made a closer examination of her body.

"She will probably live, but I am afraid her feet and hands are frozen beyond remedy. Still, I will give them a treatment that has proved successful in more than one extreme case."

It was two days ere A-chon-ho-ah regained consciousness, though it seemed she could not speak. But Dr. Holley told them that this was not because she did not have the power of speech, but because her mind was a kind of blank. She was completely dazed after her terrible experience and the time she had lain unconscious. She would come to herself after a while, for this matter, and it might be, too, that her feet and hands could be saved. The good doctor had assuredly worked faithfully over them.

In the meantime, a messenger had been sent to A-chon-ho-ah's camp to inform her parents of her rescue from the snow. Great had been their alarm when she had not returned at the expected time. Again and again Atogeer reproached herself for having let her go. But her grief over Narva had been so great that she had really taken no notice of the threatening weather.

Narva was still alive, but so ill that her mother

could not leave her, though poor Atogeer's heart was torn with distraction with reference to A-chon-ho-ah. But the messenger had told her how well she was being cared for, and this relieved her anxiety somewhat.

But Ton-ke-a-bau came at once to see A-chon-ho-ah, and proved that he had a true heart, after all, under his rough exterior, by the love and solicitude he bestowed upon his little girl.

At last it was decided that A-chon-ho-ah would not lose the use of her feet and hands. Dr. Holley's untiring patience and skill had been rewarded. They might for a time be numb and unwieldy, but she would, in the end, recover the use of them.

A-chon-ho-ah relapsed into unconsciousness again and had many days of burning fever. Then she tossed restlessly from side to side, moaning piteously of the darkening way and of the falling snow. One cry there was, too, above all the others—the cry for Dau-ka-ye and the light.

At last there came a day when A-chon-ho-ah returned to consciousness and to speech, though at first the latter was but a feeble effort.

It was on a beautiful, clear morning, and the sunlight was flooding the room. It lay in golden patches upon the bed and upon the floor.

It also cast a radiance here and there upon the walls.

A-chon-ho-ah opened her eyes, saw the sunlight, and a faint cry escaped her. She stretched out her hands as though she would reach it and draw it to her.

"Oh, the light!" she said, with a note of joy, though so faintly that Emma, who was sitting near the bed, could scarcely hear it. Then her eyes wandered searchingly, earnestly, around the room, and again her lips moved. This time it was but a single word that escaped them; but, oh! what fervor A-chon-ho-ah threw into that word, though so weak she could scarcely utter it. The word was "*Dau-ka-ye!*"

Emma caught the word and knew its meaning. She had heard A-chon-ho-ah use it before. How vividly she recalled now the times it had been spoken between them on the prairie and in the tents!

"Yes, *Dau-ka-ye*," she said, bending over A-chon-ho-ah, and speaking gently and softly, "the dear, good, tender, loving Jesus, who has been so good to you, A-chon-ho-ah."

A-chon-ho-ah turned her eyes upon her inquiringly.

"It was he that brought you safely through the tempest and from the snow. You remember the snow, A-chon-ho-ah, do you not?"

But, instead of replying, A-chon-ho-ah's eyes took on a deeper, a more radiant look, while her lips seemed fairly to glow as the words escaped them.

"Oh, has he come?"

Emma saw her mistake. She must be literal with this groping mind. As yet it could not grasp figurative speech, at least not unless it was very clear.

"I did not mean that he, Dau-ka-ye, was really here, A-chon-ho-ah. I meant that he had had care of you, even from away up yonder in his home, and that he had so directed things that my father and Psait-ca, the Indian boy, were led to find you."

Then Emma told her as much of the story as she thought it best for her to hear.

But A-chon-ho-ah paid little heed. Her whole thoughts were with Dau-ka-ye. One thing particularly was uppermost in her mind. He had not come! Why had he not? Alas! now what was to become of poor Wanda, of Narva, and of all who depended so upon his coming?

This thought made A-chon-ho-ah very sad, but though so depressed in mind, she grew better rapidly. Soon she was sitting up. Tonke-a-bau came regularly to see her. Atogeer, too, had been there; not once, but twice.

Narva was better. How glad this news made A-chon-ho-ah's heart! perhaps Dau-ka-ye, after all, though he had not come, had sent something to cure her. How she would love him now! But she had loved him before, yet not so much as now.

Those were hours never to be forgotten by A-chon-ho-ah, the hours spent at the mission-house when she was coming back to strength again. Such a sweet atmosphere as surrounded everything! All were so gentle and so kind. Oh! why could not the Indians live so? Doubtless they would when they learned of Dau-ka-ye and began to expect his coming. Oh, how she wished they could all learn of him, and thus strive to lead such lives as would please him!

The missionary came in every day to see her when he was there, and sometimes twice a day. Every time he came he read to her in the little Testament, and such beautiful talks he made!

One day A-chon-ho-ah said to him, "Dau-ka-ye has not come, and yet you say you have him here with you all the time? How can that be?"

The missionary placed his hand upon his heart. "I have him here, my child," he replied, "right here in my heart. I cannot see him, but I can *feel* him."

A sudden light shone in A-chon-ho-ah's eyes.

"What is it to *feel* him?" she asked, and almost it seemed that she was holding her breath, so great was the intensity with which she waited for the answer.

"It is to be happy, my child, oh, *so* happy! to have light and joy beyond words to describe."

"And does he make the light and joy without our seeing him?"

"Yes, my child, the very knowledge that he is our friend, our Saviour; that he died to save us from our sins—this of itself is enough to make joy in our hearts."

"But you said you had *him*, had Dau-ka-ye himself, in your heart," she replied, still incredulously.

"So I have, my child. Let me read to you in the little book you have learned to love so well." Picking up the little Testament that lay near at hand, he read to her from John xiv. 23: "'Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.' So, you see, my dear A-chon-ho-ah, we have only to love Dau-ka-ye, and to keep the commandments he has given us, to have him come and dwell with us here in our hearts."

"I do love him," said A-chon-ho-ah, earn-

estly. Then a sudden joyous look came into her face; "and, oh!" she continued, "it makes me very, very happy to feel that I love him."

A glad thrill went to the missionary's heart. Ah! now, indeed, A-chon-ho-ah was getting near the light.

He left her with an earnest, musing look upon her face; but there was joy in the look, as well as earnestness.

The next day, as soon as he entered the room, she greeted him radiantly: "Oh! I have been so happy since you told me that about Jesus coming to dwell in our hearts," she said. "Ever since I heard of him and of his coming I have been looking for him to come in the clouds. I thought it would be upon the mountain, there where it was so beautiful and grand, and the ledge looked like a throne. Oh! I did wait and long and watch for him so! All the morning of the day that they said was his birthday I stood in the cold and wind of the prairie, Wanda and I, and watched for his coming. Once it seemed that he was really coming, for there was such a beautiful light that shone out from the clouds. Then Wanda had to go, and they sent to tell me that my little sister was dying. Oh! that was so awful that I forgot all about Dau-ka-ye. But I thought of him again as I was wandering

through the snow and the darkness. I did so long to see even a little ray of light. Oh! it was so terrible not to find him there on the mountain! And I had felt so sure that he would come, as it was the day of his birth."

The missionary took her hand, gazing earnestly in her eyes.

"My poor child," he said, "how great has been the darkness in which you have wandered!" Then, after a moment's pause, he continued, "A-chon-ho-ah, Dau-ka-ye *will* come, and, as you have pictured, in the clouds; but, as to when that time is to be, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven. Then we shall see him with the eye; now we have to feel him with the heart, for though he comes to dwell with us now, as I have read you in the little Testament, he does not reveal himself to us, that is, to our eyes, but we are aware of his presence in our hearts by the gladness he brings there."

A-chon-ho-ah's eyes glowed radiantly; a quick smile parted her lips.

"Ever since you told me that yesterday I have thought of it. To think Dau-ka-ye can come to our hearts! Almost I feel he *could* come to mine. Oh, good missionary, do you think, do you really think he would—he would

come and dwell in the heart of a poor little Indian girl like me?"

"My child, I am sure of it," Mr. Melville returned quickly, and oh, so earnestly; "only love him with all that heart, and he will be sure to take up his abode there. Only trust him, A-chon-ho-ah. Say, 'Dear Jesus, I believe, I feel, I *know* that thou art my Saviour!'"

"Oh, I do! I do!" she cried, her eyes radiant, her lips parted. "He *is* my Saviour. I feel it! I know it! And, oh, I am *so* happy! *so* happy! Good missionary, can you not see how very, very happy I am?"

Ah! indeed, he *could* see it. Who could fail to see it that looked upon A-chon-ho-ah's glowing face at that moment?

At last, at last, the light! Not such light, nor in such a way as A-chon-ho-ah expected, but oh, how joyous, how beautiful! It filled her whole heart with radiance. It made her feel that she had a new heart altogether, a heart that fairly shone with the glorious light that now flooded it. Now, indeed, she had found and *knew* Dau-ka-ye; now, indeed, he dwelt with her.

Yes, at last, at last the light—the full, beautiful, joyous light! Out of the shadows of hesitancy, of uncertain questionings; out of the murky twilight of misgivings, of doubt; yea, out

of the very darkness of ignorance, of superstition, of despair, A-chon-ho-ah had come unto the Light—unto that Light which if anyone has, and it abides with him, he never more stumbles.

If you had known Anadarko at the time the events narrated in this story took place, and should go there now that five years have elapsed, you would be surprised at the changes, especially in that portion adjacent to the mission-house. The church has grown wonderfully, not only the building, but also the membership. There is also a large two-story hall, where the Indians meet for seasons of improvement to mind and heart—Christian Endeavor meetings in fact. But there is a greater addition still. This is the school operated by the good missionary women of the church to which Mr. Melville belongs. This school has nearly a hundred pupils, and is doing a glorious work. There is a young native teacher engaged in this school in whom I am sure you would be interested at first sight. There would certainly be something familiar in the slim, graceful figure, the earnest face and speaking eyes. It is, in short, none other than our old friend A-chon-ho-ah. But, oh, such a different A-chon-ho-ah she is now! educated, refined, and her whole life radiant

with that beautiful light that has never ceased to shine for her since that day, five years ago, when she came so joyously into it. Narva, too, is in this school, a sturdy, earnest girl, and one of its most promising pupils. Atogeer also has become a Christian, and Ton-ke-a-bau no longer opposes the good missionary nor any of his work. As to poor little Wanda, she died the very day that A-chon-ho-ah began to sit up, from the effects of a cruel beating bestowed by Har-we-poy-er a week before while in a rage. Her parents could do nothing with him, because he denied the beating, and there was no witness bold enough to fasten it upon him.

A-chon-ho-ah mourned long and deeply for her friend, her little playmate. She never saw her again after that day on the prairie when together they had watched for the coming of Dau-ka-ye, never again! But now, when she thinks of her, it is never of the Wanda cowed, miserable and abused, but always of the happy, bright-eyed Wanda she will meet "in the beautiful light of God."





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